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THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

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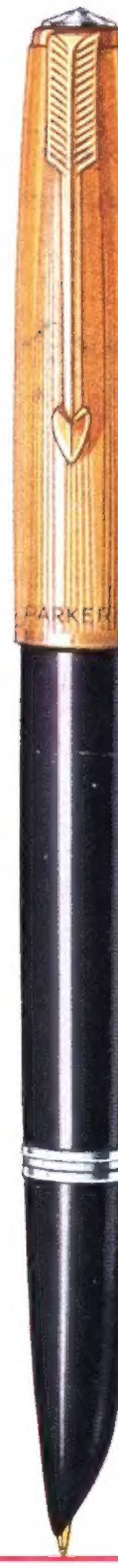

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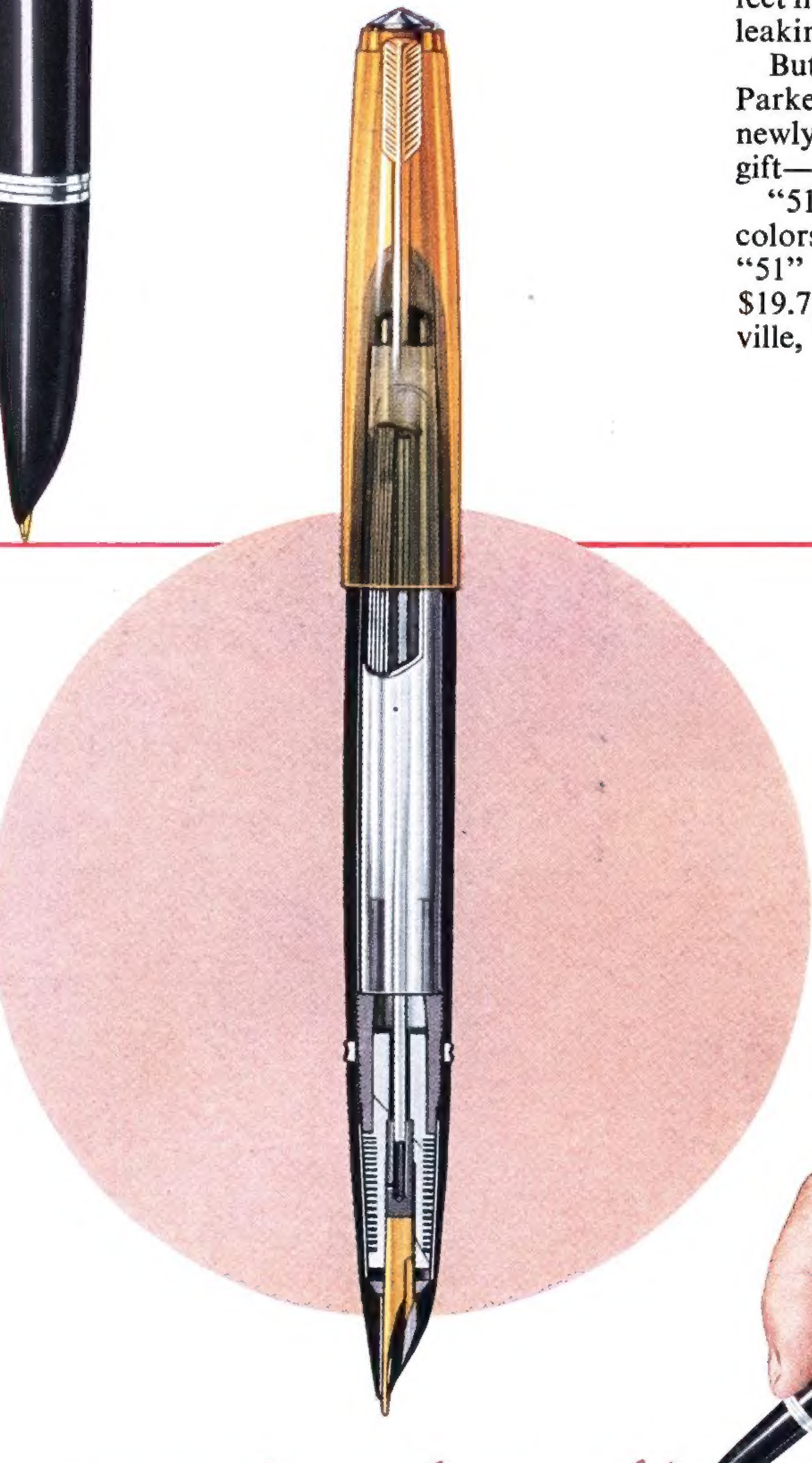

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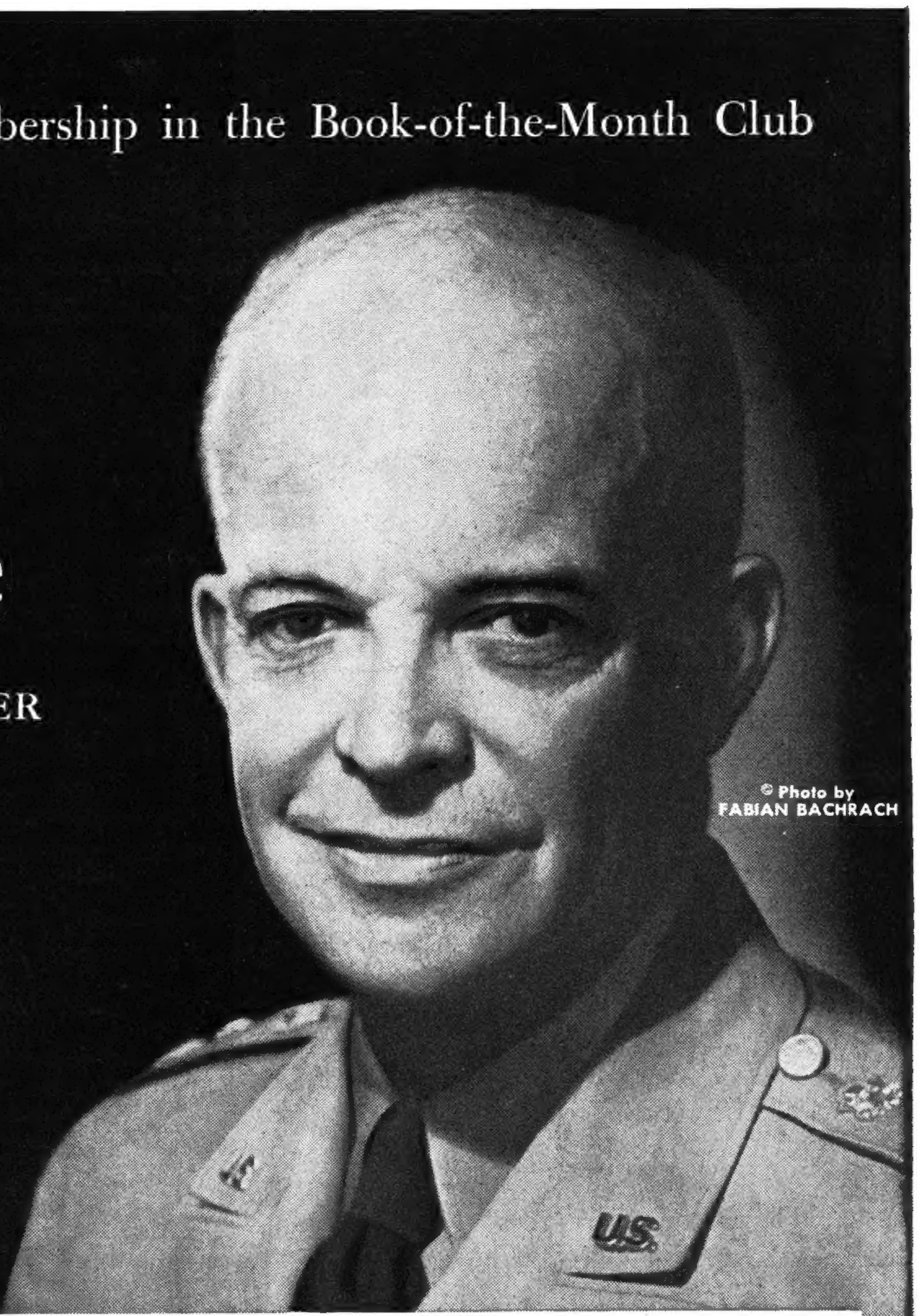

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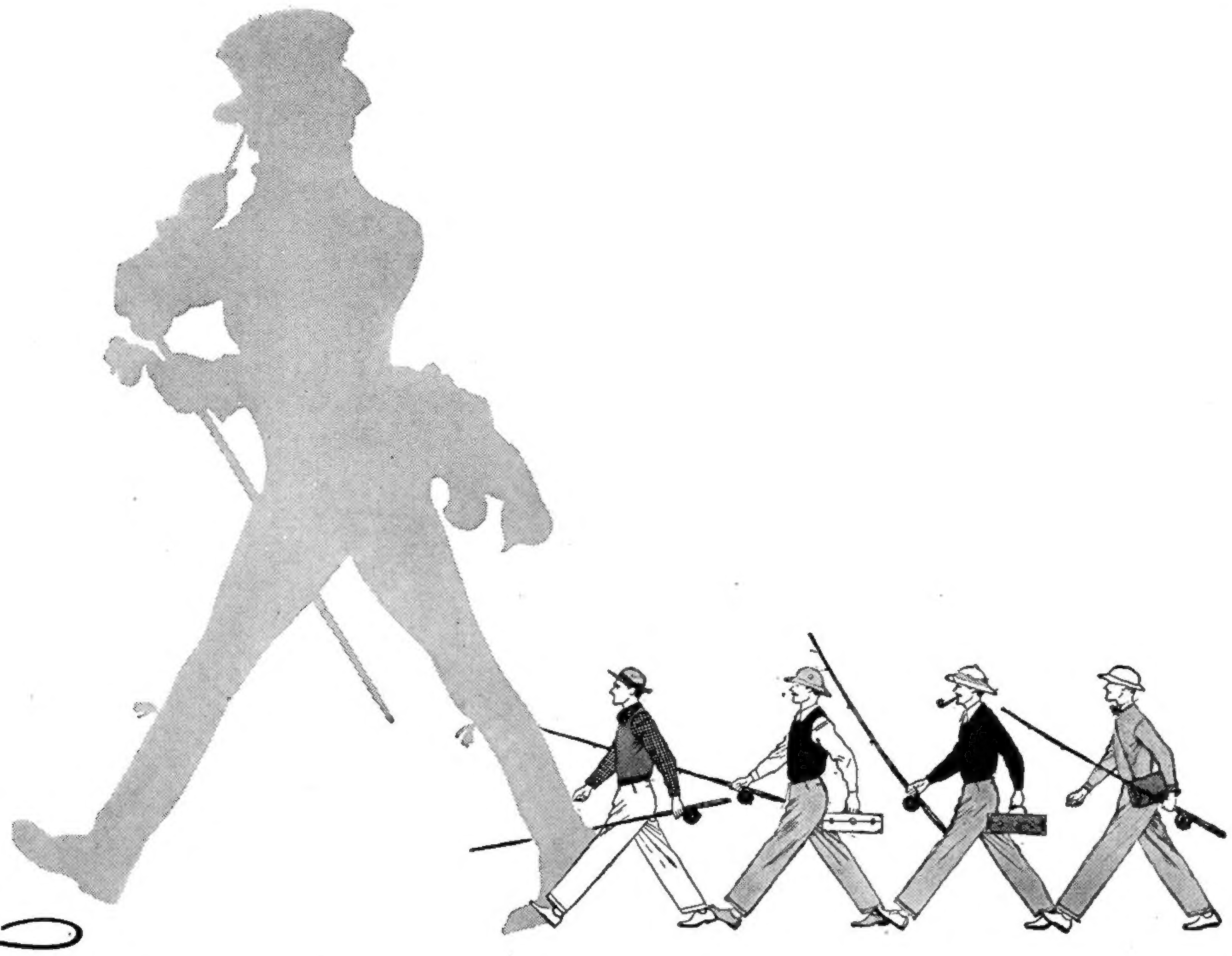

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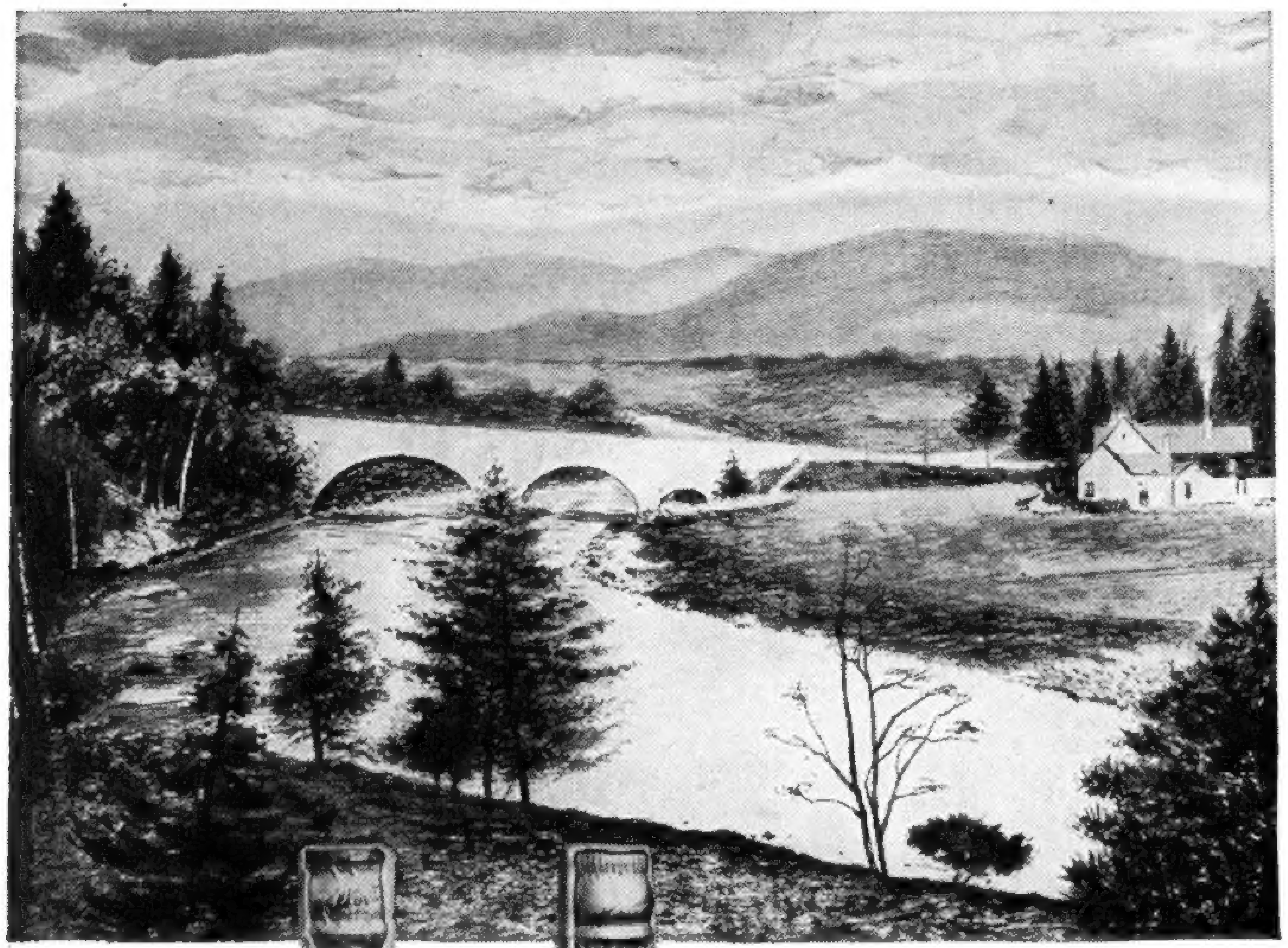

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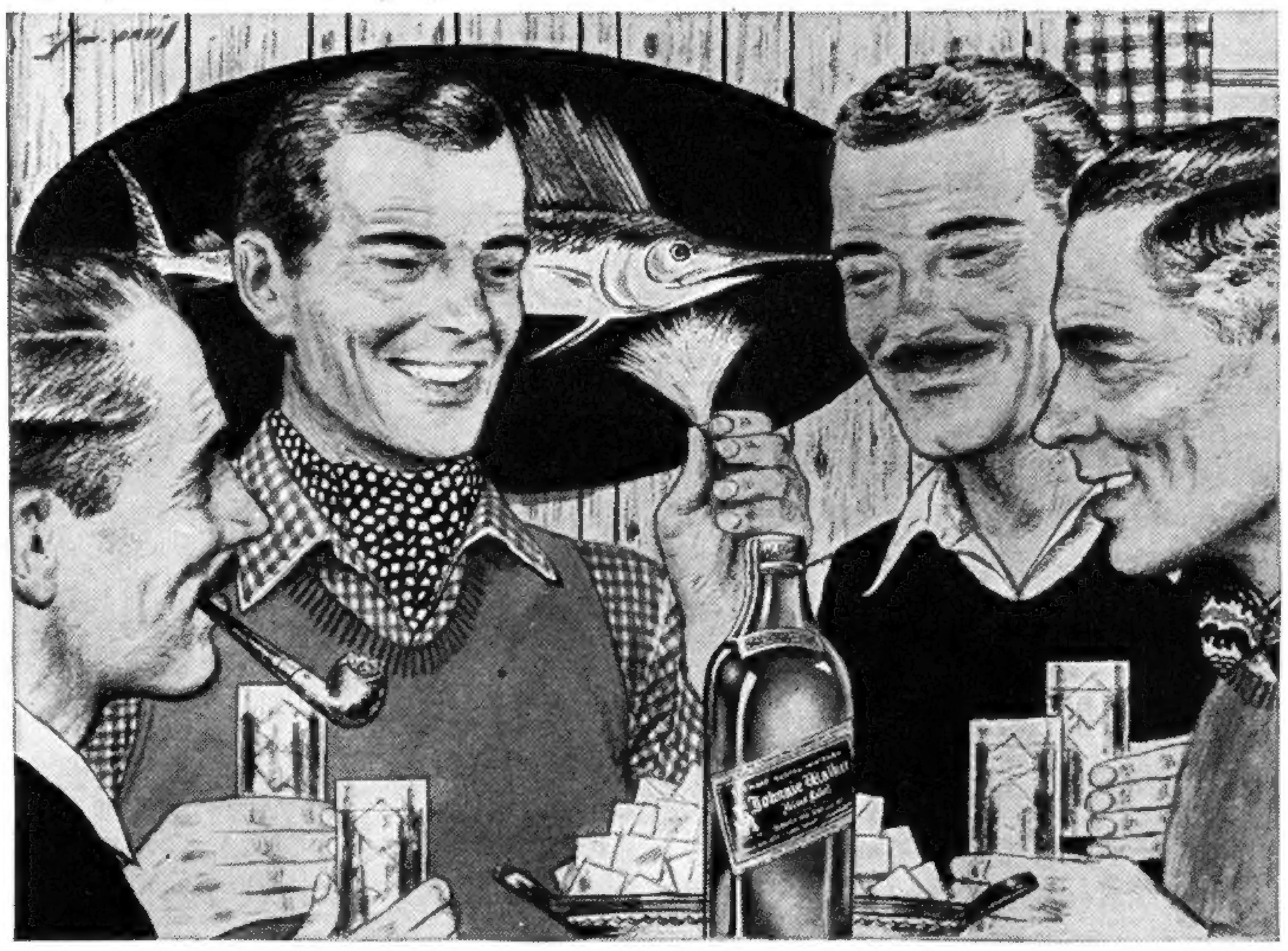

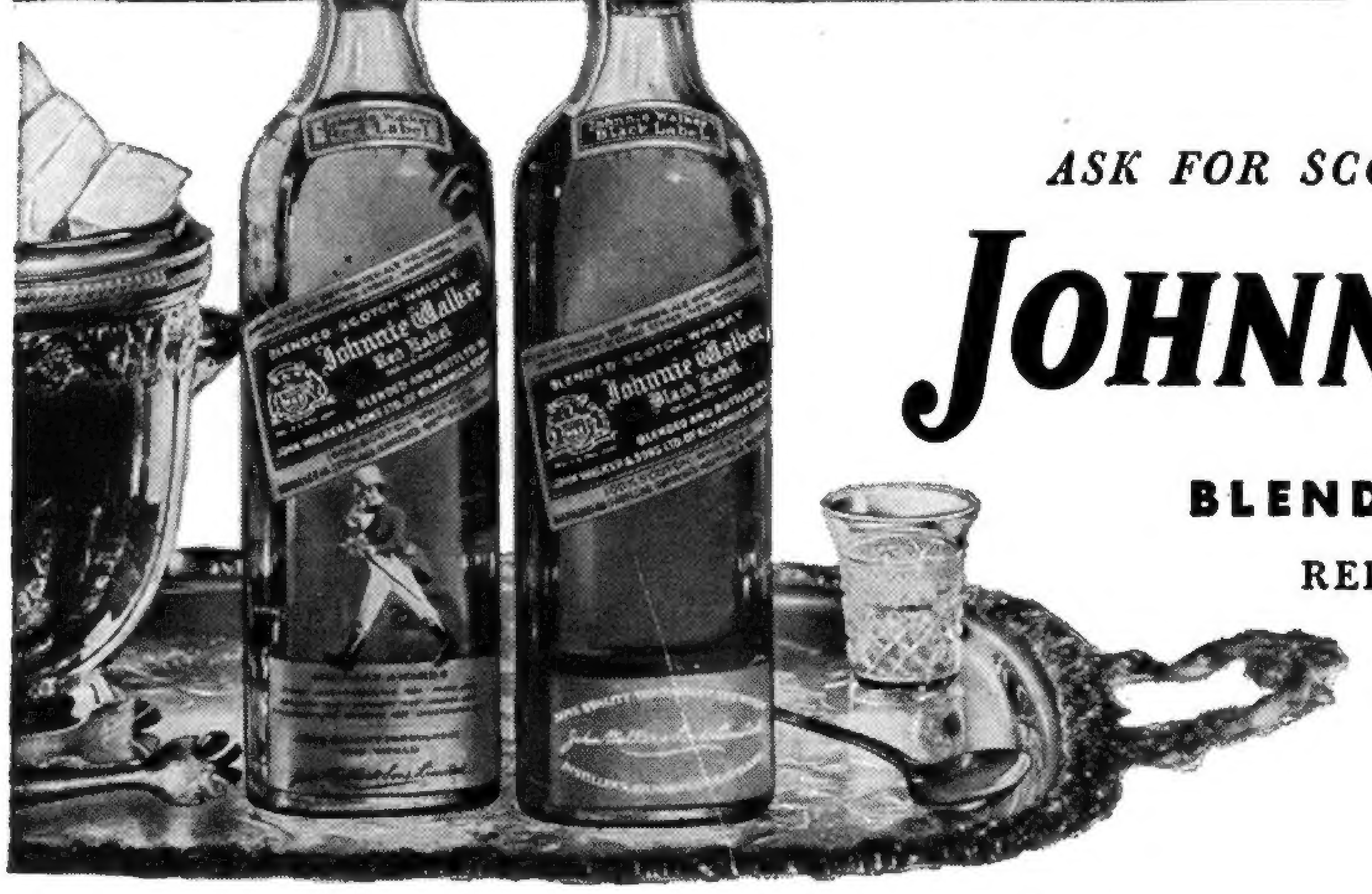

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memo from the publisher:

on the march

Perhaps you know that a magazine publisher produces a product comparable in every respect to the manufacture of tooth paste, of hats, of automobiles and of other products that are offered for sale to the American public.

No matter how highly the publisher regards his magazine, there is only one final test and that is whether that magazine is voluntarily bought by the American public in ever greater quantities.

The sale of any product can be stimulated for a short period by promotion and advertising, but unless the product itself is sound, unless it performs a definite service, unless it fills a basic need, it will not enjoy lasting success.

It is with these thoughts in mind that we are deeply gratified to report that you and hundreds of thousands like you have subscribed to or bought on the newsstands more copies of Esquire during the last six months of 1948 than during any other six-month period in Esquire's history. The word-of-mouth approval that has been largely responsible for our increasing readership has been one of the finest of testimonials of your liking of the new Esquire.

In this issue, beginning on page 58, our fashion section is directed particularly to the interests of that top group of Americans, our Men of Affairs, men who have reached the top rung of the American economic ladder and who, by the thousands, are setting the standards of good taste for the world today.

These are the men who have replaced the kings and princes of another era and the fortunate thing for America is that fashions these men can afford and wear are also available to millions of Americans through our great mass-production processes.

Esquire commends the conservative good taste of these gentlemen for their leadership in fashion as well as affairs.

HTS

Esquire

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Esquire is published monthly by Esquire, Inc., David A. Smart, Chairman of the Board; Alfred Smart, President & Treas.; A. L. Blinder, Vice-Pres. & Cir. Dir.; G. T. Sweetser, Vice-Pres. in Chg. Adv.; John Smart, Vice-Pres. in Chg. Purch.; Gus Berkes, Vice-Pres. & Prod. Dir.; Lester Petchaft, Sec.; A. D. Elden, Asst. Sec.-Treas. Editorial and Art Depts., 366 Madison Ave., New York City 17. Circulation, Business, and Production Depts., Esquire Building, Chicago 1, Ill. Entered as 2nd class matter at Post Office at Chicago, Ill., Dec. 15, 1933 under Act of March 3, 1879. Postage must accompany manuscripts and drawings if return is desired, but no responsibility will be assumed for loss or damage to unsolicited materials. Manuscripts, drawings and cartoons should be sent to Esquire, Inc., 366 Madison Ave., New York City 17. Advertising offices, 366 Madison Ave., New York City 17. Subscriptions in the United States and possessions, Pan-American Union and Canada, $6.00 a year in advance; elsewhere, $12.00. Subscribers changing their addresses should notify Esquire Subscription Dept. 30 days before change is to take place. Give both old and new addresses

Editorial:

Where's the Fire?

The skipper of the Navy patrol bomber looked down on the Nazi submarine, wallowing in its death throes in the cold Atlantic.

"We got the bastard," he said quietly. "Good job."

He paused.

"I guess," he said slowly, "if you've got to do something and do it well, you damn well must be on fire. You can be on fire with love or hate, but you've got to burn inside."

We thought of the skipper this month as we scheduled Richard Gehman's thoughtful article *Where Are the Postwar Novels?* The skipper was a writer, too, but after the war he was "too tired" to do anything about it. The fire that had burned so fiercely that day in the face of the Nazi gunners was out.

That must be what Mr. Gehman had in mind when he wrote his article. He's been waiting in vain for the great novel that was to have come out of the war. And, in a general way, so have we. Waiting . . . and wondering if some typewriter has started to smoke yet.

Where is the unknown with the power and burning drive of a Hemingway? Where is the next *Snows of Kilimanjaro*? Where is the new Steinbeck to write another *A Snake of One's Own*? Where is the writer to pick up where good Roark Bradford has now left off, for Bradford had his own gentle and persistent fires? Isn't it time they turned up?

"Writers are sissies nowadays," someone said to us just the other day.

We can't agree there. We know most of the men who wrote the stories and articles in this issue of Esquire. We know where a lot of them were during the war, and sissies couldn't walk out of those holes. We can think, too, of other authors now writing for Esquire and for other magazines. One of them works twelve hours a day in the worst kind of a factory—that's to keep the groceries coming. At night he pecks at his typewriter, the one with no lower-case type to speak of and no capital "s" either, so that his manuscripts come in all in capital letters and he must use "z" for "s" in his courageous fight for ZUCCEZZ. Another man writes from a hospital, and it looks as though he may never have another address to which we must send his check, or rejection slip. Another one of our contributors is in jail.

No, certainly not sissies.

But on the other hand a Pietro Di Donato hasn't put down his trowel and given the world another *Christ in Concrete* for some time. Maybe the young men and the young writers are tired, like the skipper on the bomber, or just shocked into a cool and only adequate professionalism by the war and its aftermath. It isn't just Esquire that's waiting. Ask any editor, ask any publisher, ask any book salesman you know. They're all waiting, waiting for the spontaneous rush and vigor of a talent just released. They all want it: we want it.

Where's the fire, gentlemen? There's white paper stacked high in every shop waiting to feed it.

. . . they Walk in Beauty at Ohio University

Our art director, a harried soul whose only task is to be a genius, businessman, diplomat, prophet, cheerleader, public speaker, and crayon sharpener, all at the same time, occasionally does have a diversion come his way. Not relaxation, by any means, but by all human standards we maintain that only a wretch unacquainted with the muses could fail to enjoy such a duty—that of selecting a beauty queen. Our man, who was indeed brought up by the proper muses, relishes this facet of his job, we are pleased to report, and we are proud to reproduce here the stunning reasons for his contentment.

The charming young ladies are undergraduates at Ohio University, and since it was the art director's enviable assignment to select a queen and court of two ladies-in-waiting for the University's yearbook, the 1949 *Athena*, he emerged with this winning and winsome trio. The beautiful young lady in the center picture is Miss Mary Margaret Wodarczek, and is Ohio University's and our own favorite queen: Her ladies-in-waiting are Miss Barbara Metcalfe (left) and Miss Ann Channell (right). It would seem that, mixed with the art director's joy, must have been a bitter twinge or two. How does one select a queen from three such as these? He seen his duty and he done it, but we know his secret heart. He loves them all, and so do we. Lovely young ladies, with a heart forever young, and with a slight noise of creaking joints, Esky bends a knee and bows from the waist. Salute! ✝✝

Charles Stewart

Frank Thompson

Darrell Tom

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empire of rogues

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There were women in this scarlet land who became passionately interested in Pierre's affairs . . . Irene, dancer at the Tavern of the Eastern Star, who would have tempted a man of ice! . . . And ravishing, raven-haired, high-born Stephanie. And Chadaze, the voluptuous slave-girl, adept in the subtle caresses learned in a dozen harems!

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Every other month you will receive the Club's descriptive folder called The Bulletin. The Bulletin describes the forthcoming two months' book selections. It also reviews about ten additional titles (in the original publishers' editions selling at retail for $2.50 or more) available to members at only $1.00 each. You may purchase either or both of the two new selections for $1.00 each, or neither. In any case, you may buy any of the other titles offered for $1.00 each.

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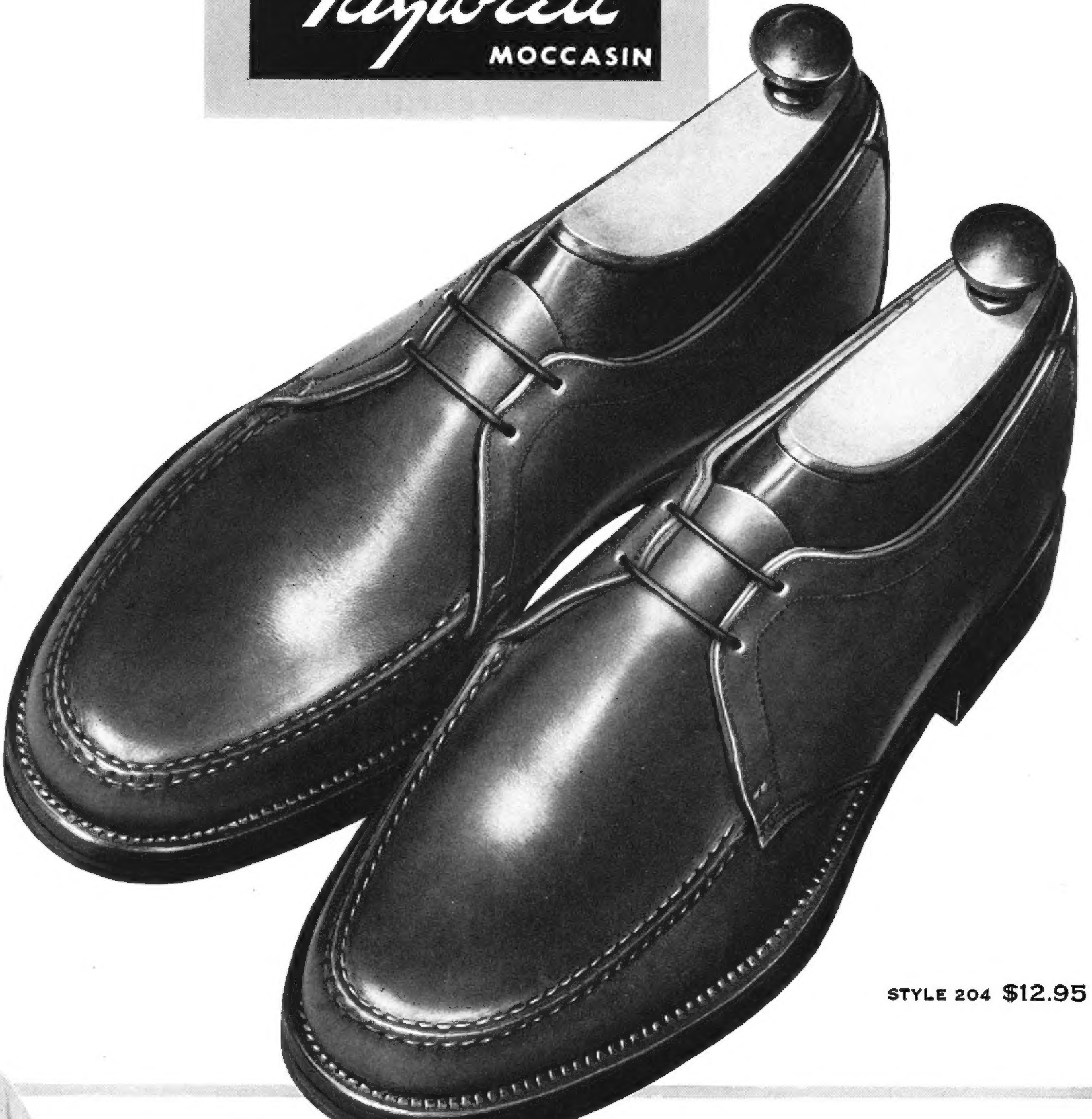

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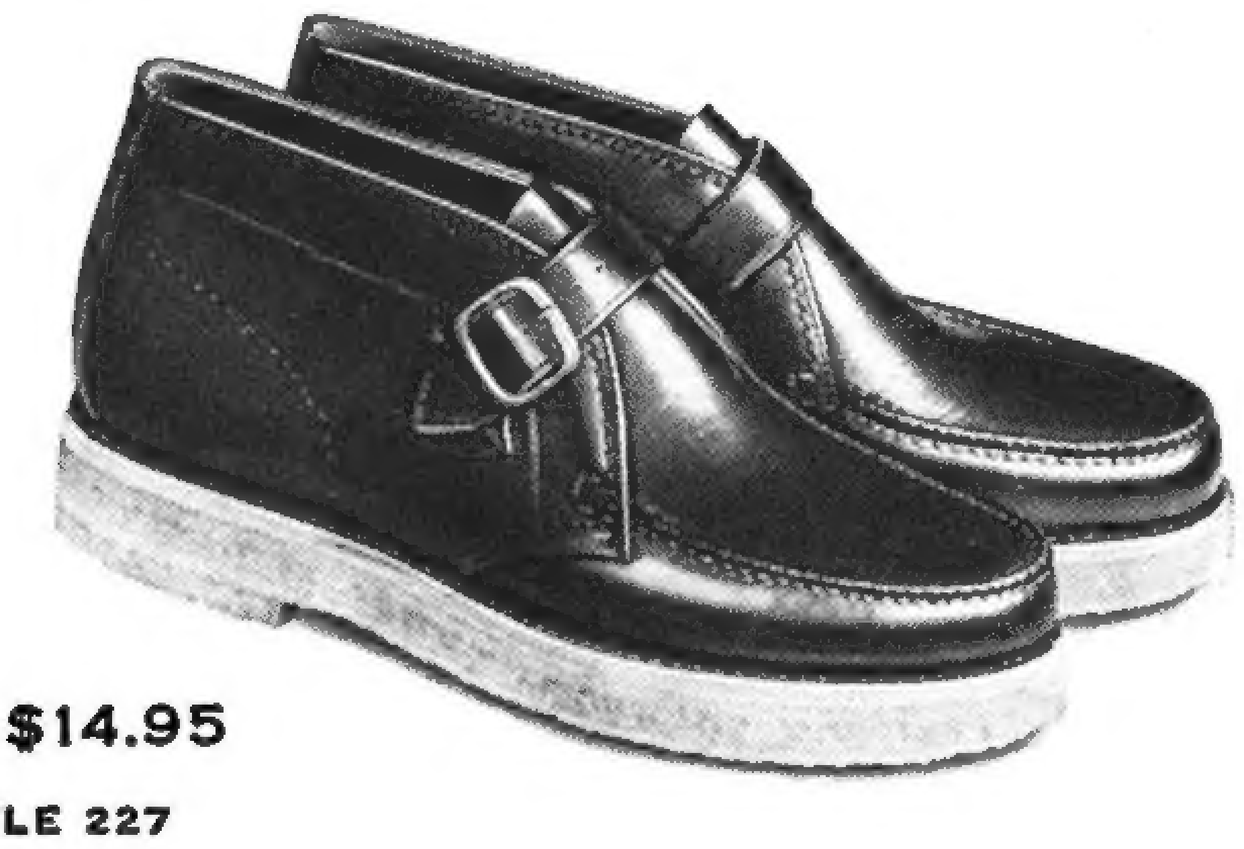

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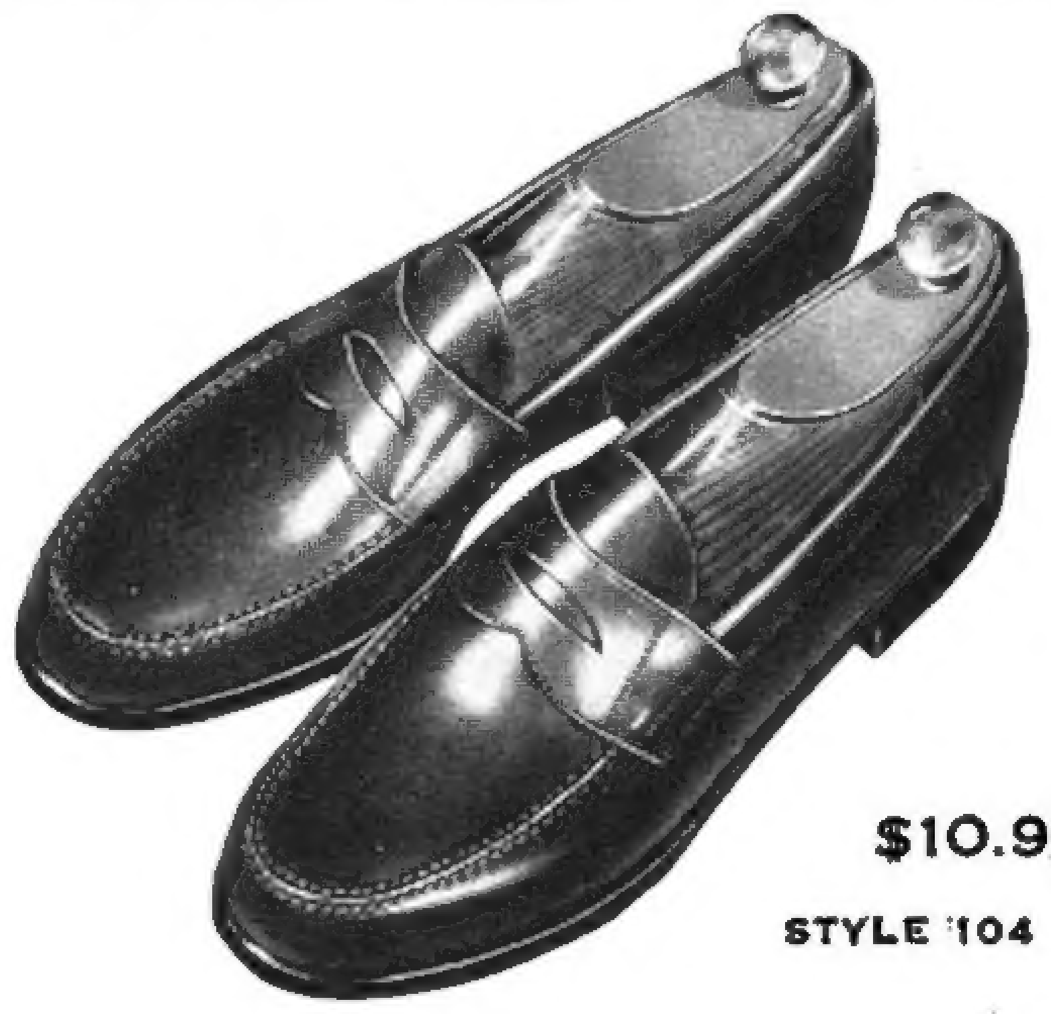

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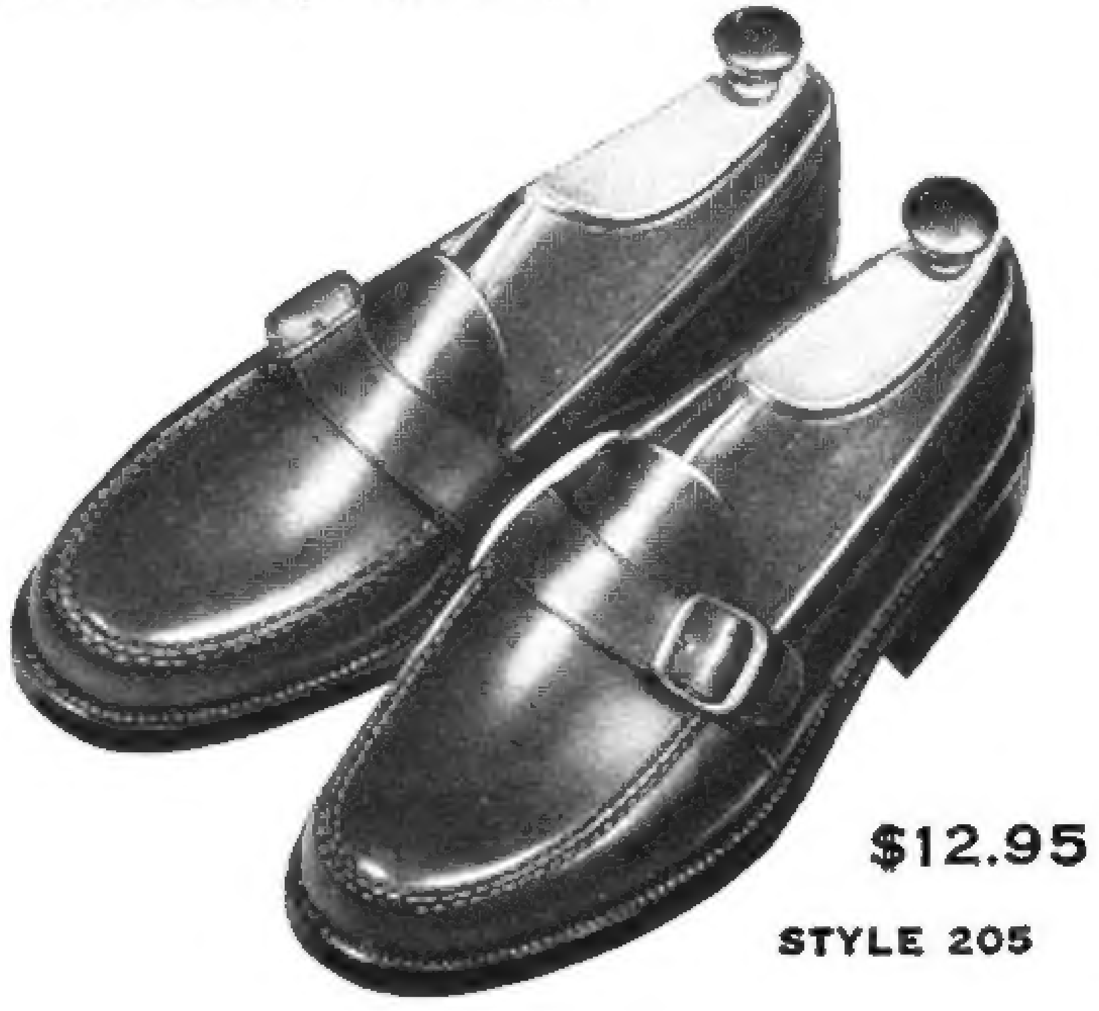

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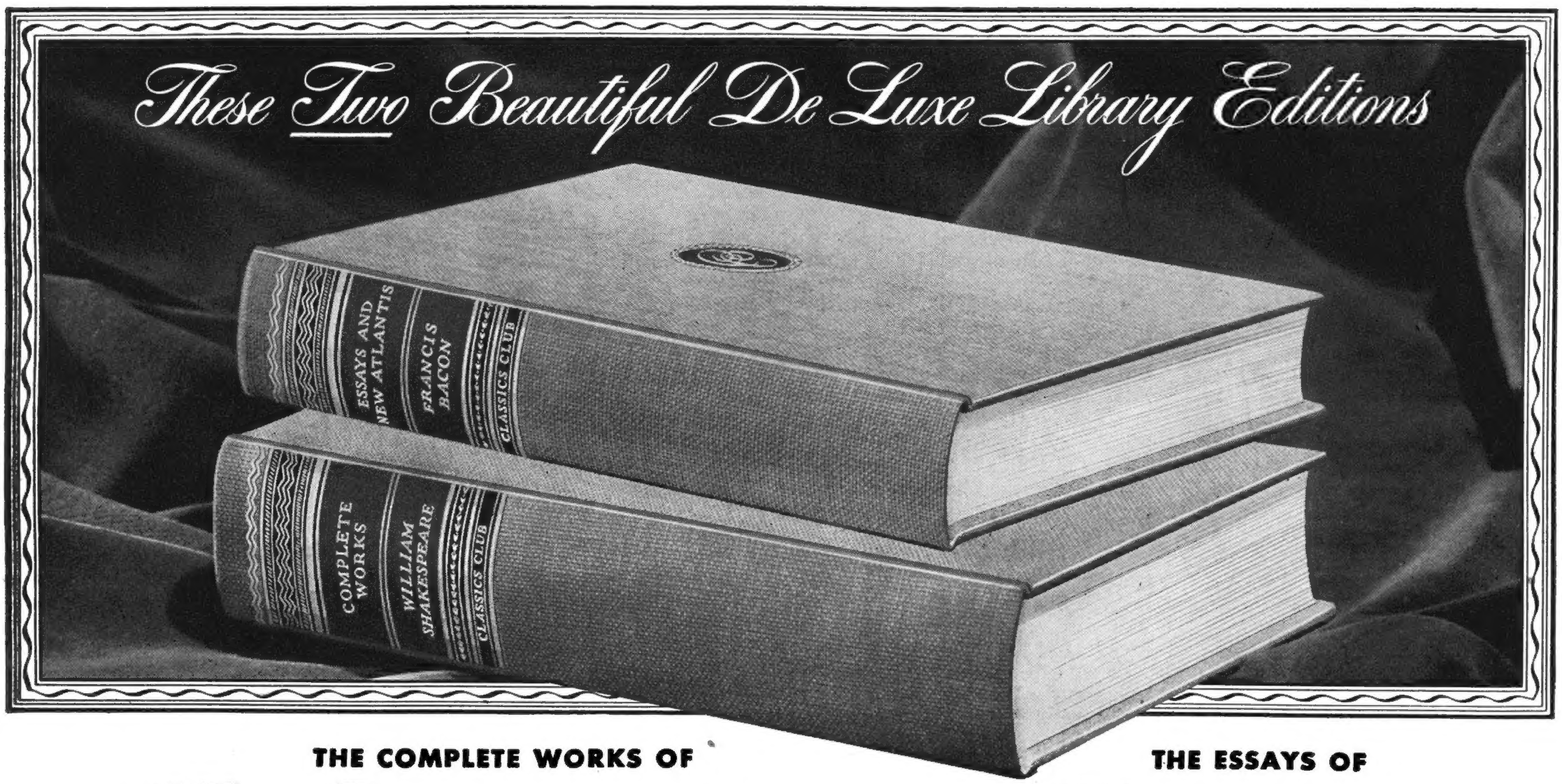

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The Sound and the Fury

all-approving guest

Some time ago I wrote to you asking if you could find someone to send me some old copies of Esquire. You kindly passed on my name to a W. Dozier Fields of Islip, N. Y. and since then copies have been coming in regularly, and we engaged in a correspondence.

But the fact I would like to bring to your notice is, that I have just been fortunate enough to pay a visit to New York in the cast of a fashion play of British men's wear entitled *Gentlemen's Relish*, which was staged at the Plaza Hotel, and I was able to meet Mr. Fields.

Although we had never seen each other before, he did everything he could to help and entertain me during the all too brief visit, and played a big part in making my stay in a strange place a happy and memorable one.

I think you should know how grateful I am to you for providing me with the introduction, and presume this is just one more of the Esquire services.

Donovan Winter
Morden, Surrey, England

Sikh eschews tobacco

Mark Sheddon did a very unwise and dangerous thing when he offered cigarettes to his Sikh taxi driver (*The Pigeon-Blood Star*).

He was lucky to escape a black eye! Tobacco is one thing a Sikh won't allow (just as he won't let his hair be cut), and he gets very annoyed if you offer it to him.

There are lots of Sikhs in this city who drive taxis, but I would never offer cigarettes for a fare.

Sgt. Keith Larry
Singapore, Malaya

murder in moderation

Don't you think that you have gone along long enough with James West and his stories of beautiful, bosomy gals and blasé young men who are pushovers for the aforesaid beautiful, bosomy gals who are looking for an accomplice to help them out with a little murder?

For that matter don't you think that we have had enough of murder for a little while? I am not averse to a little murder now and then, but for a straight diet one gets fed up. Why does an author, after creating a successful pattern, have to play the same theme with only slight variations ad infinitum?

Leone Dudley
Lewistown, Ill.

just looking

Like the author of *A Bachelor's Confession*, I, too, am opposed to home cooking and have never eaten a meal which compares to the cuisine at Tosca's, the Domino Club, the Troc and the Wharf in San Francisco, the House of Murphy in Hollywood, the Pump Room in Chicago, to name a few; but our pocket can't afford a daily inhabitance of those famous kitchens. So until we make our first million, we'll have to be content to eat out three or four times a week and suffer through my cooking the rest of the time. As for my spouse changing his mind after I've cooked a meal, I will concede that the main course would hit him in the head, skillet and all. I'm not running a short-order house.

You stated that many married men hang out at bars and instruct the bartenders to advise their wives they haven't been there. That's what starts the ball rolling toward divorce. Our big, brave male starts lying about little things instead of telling the little woman he had some drinks at the local pub. So what! Maybe "wifey" is out having a drink with the girls, but I have yet to hear one instruct the bartender that if "the old man" calls she's not there. Those men you mentioned must be spineless jellyfish.

My husband and I enjoy each other's companionship in everything from hunting deer in an isolated Utah mountain range to struggling through the rumba at a crowded nightclub. The only thing we've given up is the opposite sex and my husband isn't impervious to a pair of beautiful gams, but to date I haven't put blinders and a bit on him.

On the other hand I'm not blind to the tall, dark, and handsome Cary Grant type.

J.A.U.
Stockton, Calif.

of dolls and dicks

Isn't it about time that authors like James West gave us a rest from the eternal battle of sexes? (See *Leopard Spots, Cloak Across the Blood*, etc.)

Of course, it flatters the ego of a certain type of man to be told that all women are either vapid, moronic baby dolls, or ruthless self-seeking double-crossing so and so's, but after all there is nothing new in that idea. You will find several of both types described in the Bible quite as well as in Mr. West's stories.

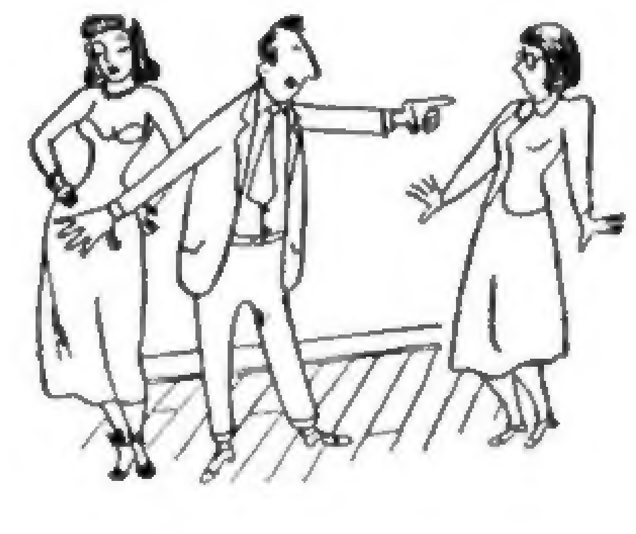
Walter S. Hughes
Ojai, Calif.

humor-Esky

After being in the hospital for six months, one can't help noticing how patients pounce on American magazines and read them from cover to cover.

Yesterday an Esquire found its way into the ward. Even though it is 15 months old, it has gone from bed to bed as if it were this month's. Could you find space to print this letter, and then when folks "over there" realize how much we appreciate your colored magazines and the humorous cartoons, maybe they would post them on to us when they have finished?

Rita Marsland
Grove Park Hospital
Lee, London, S. E. 12
England



hawkshaw, what quarry?

In your November The Sound and the Fury I notice that Mrs. Gronbeck, Jr., doesn't approve of our private eye's seductive women.

Personally, I enjoy reading about inviting women in my mysteries or anyplace else, and I am quite sure the majority of male readers agree with me.

I sincerely hope Esquire doesn't change its seductive heroines to please Mrs. Gronbeck. Mrs. Gronbeck, why don't you go back to your women's magazines; I am sure you will find the type of material you want and approve of there.

Kenneth A. Enochs
Modesto, Calif.

Stowe ahoy!

Your best article yet, in a constant succession of wonderful Esquires, was *What's Wrong with Our Women?* by Leland Stowe.

I know that I, and I'm sure that hundreds of thousands of other like-minded men, have been waiting for someone to put down in readable and undeniable words, the thoughts that have governed our actions for years.

As purser on a passenger ship, meeting women of all countries, in all walks of life, in all sorts of situations, I feel that any man, unprejudiced, and with the background qualifying him to make the comparison stated in the article, must subscribe to the points touched in Mr. Stowe's thesis.

All that remains, so that the article may do the most good possible, is that some well-brought-up and right-thinking women's magazine arrange with Esquire to republish the article, with a fervent postscript that "a word to the wise" should be more than sufficient.

A very sincere thank you to Leland Stowe for literally opening our minds for public inspection, and for loosing our tongues.

Franklin A. Picker
Naples, Italy
Aboard the SS *Marine Perch*

Stowe away

The prolix Mr. Leland Stowe goes on no end about our female counterparts abroad. Foreign women are more natural looking? Our top-flight models are chosen for their natural beauty, and simplicity is the latest word in fashion. We're not spiritual? Miss America of 1947 was a Sunday-school teacher. Our superficial assets? How would American men like it if all make-up was declared unconstitutional? And we women went around sans?

So we're cold—never hold hands in public? Why Mr. Stowe—come out of those libraries and uptown cocktail lounges, throw away those musty psych books, take a look at the real America: sweethearts on college campuses, Saturday night in some small town, Sunday at Coney Island, the balcony of any theatre—there's love all over the place!

I'm afraid Mr. Stowe is a part of the hard and fast clique of intellects that stay up all night debating the pros and cons of existentialism and similar earth-shaking topics. They're the "bored, restless, unsatisfied, and self-centered" creatures. The average American woman only wants a home of her own with the man she loves, a couple of kids and a fairly decent living. I don't think that's much to ask.

Thespo George
Miami, Fla.

Greek bearing stamps

I am an old admirer of Esky but unfortunately can't receive him any longer since the Greek authorities refuse me currency for a new subscription. Would any subscriber exchange his read copies for a period of three years for about 750 modern Greek stamps?

George P. Manessis
Corfu, Greece

to each his dish

It is my meager opinion that Victor Kalin has done a much better job of drawing a good Esquire Girl on page 68, than Al Moore has done in drawing Thanksgiving Dish, in the November issue.

Robert A. White
Bethlehem, Pa.

Mr. Charles Bennett, distinguished Screen Playwright

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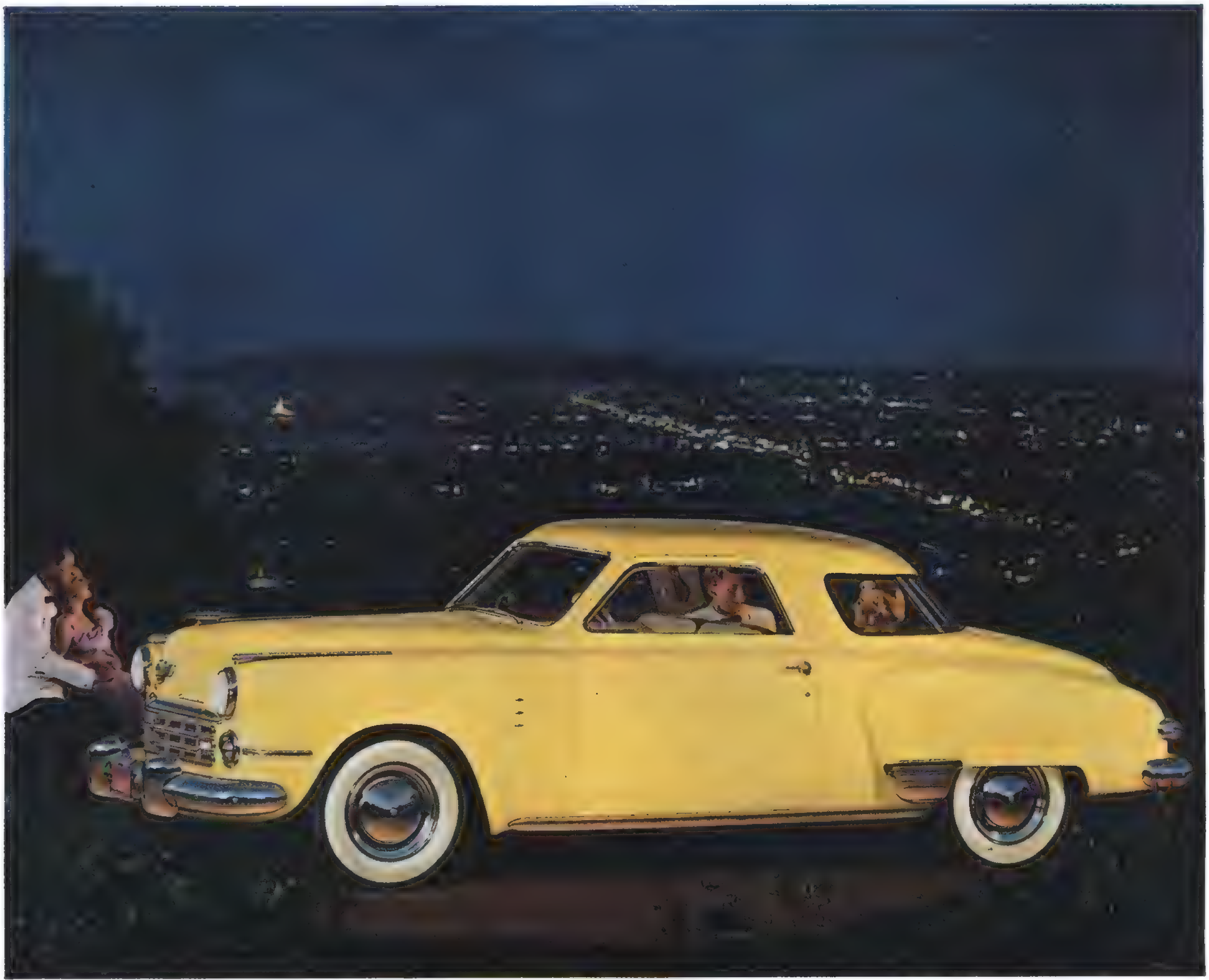

Car shown—COMMANDER STARLIGHT COUPE

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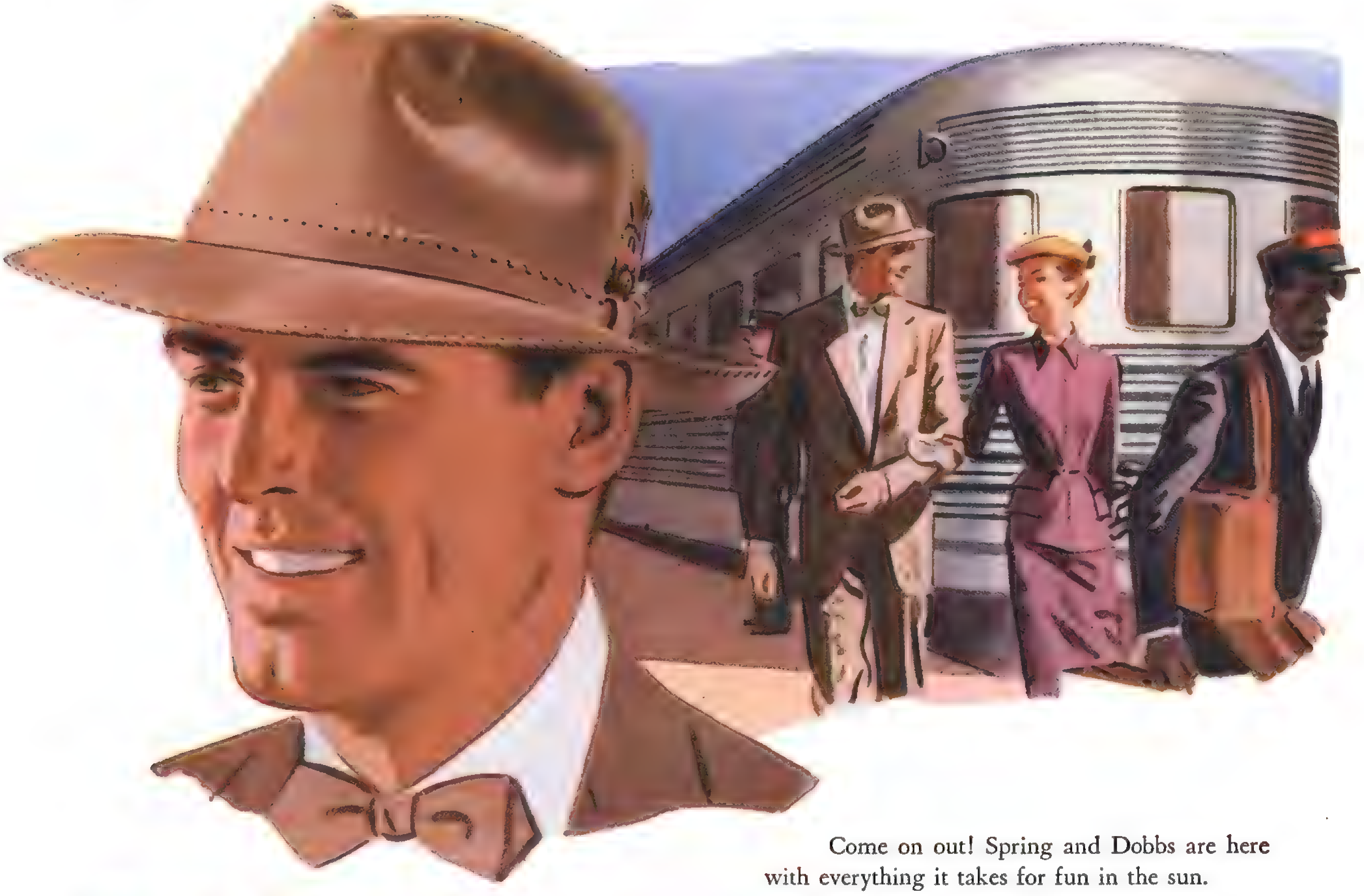
Take a moment to take a look—you'll find you want to take an hour to admire all the new luxuries and advancements in these 1949 Studebakers.

It's a Studebaker year again all over America!

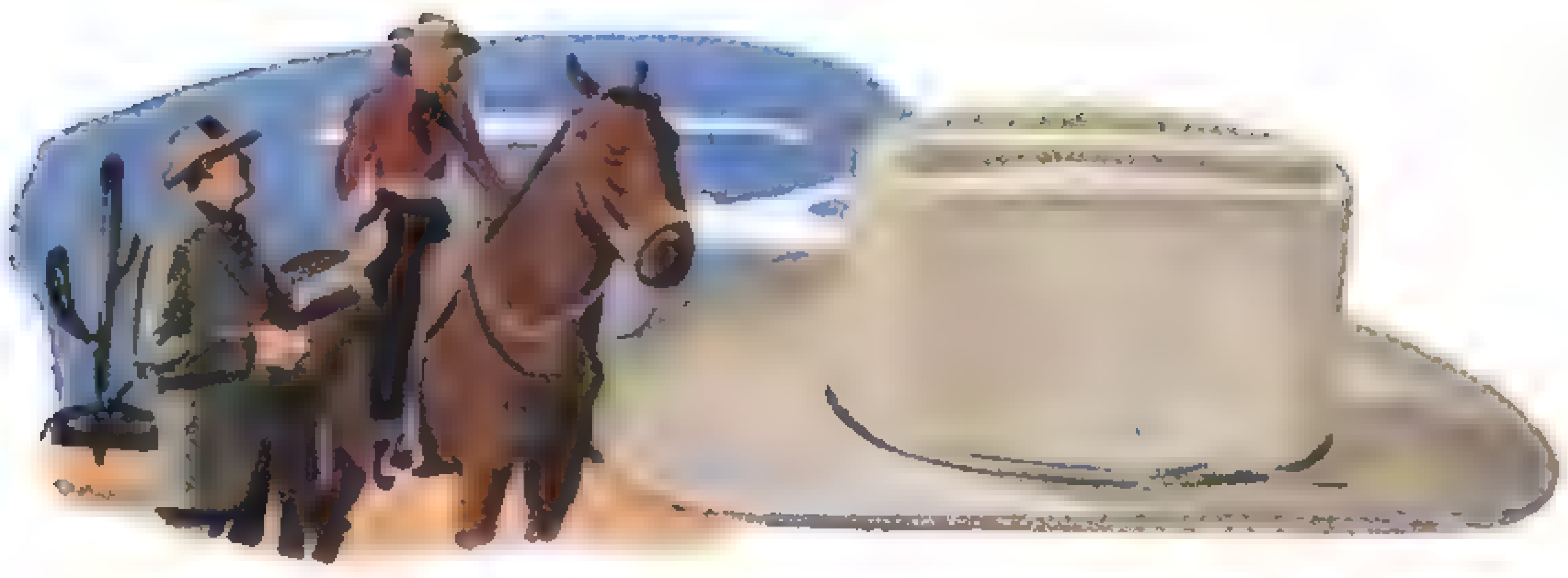


Bound to be great outdoors
It's the DOBBS

Come on out! Spring and Dobbs are here with everything it takes for fun in the sun. Hats for active sports. Hats for spectator sports. Hats for good sports.

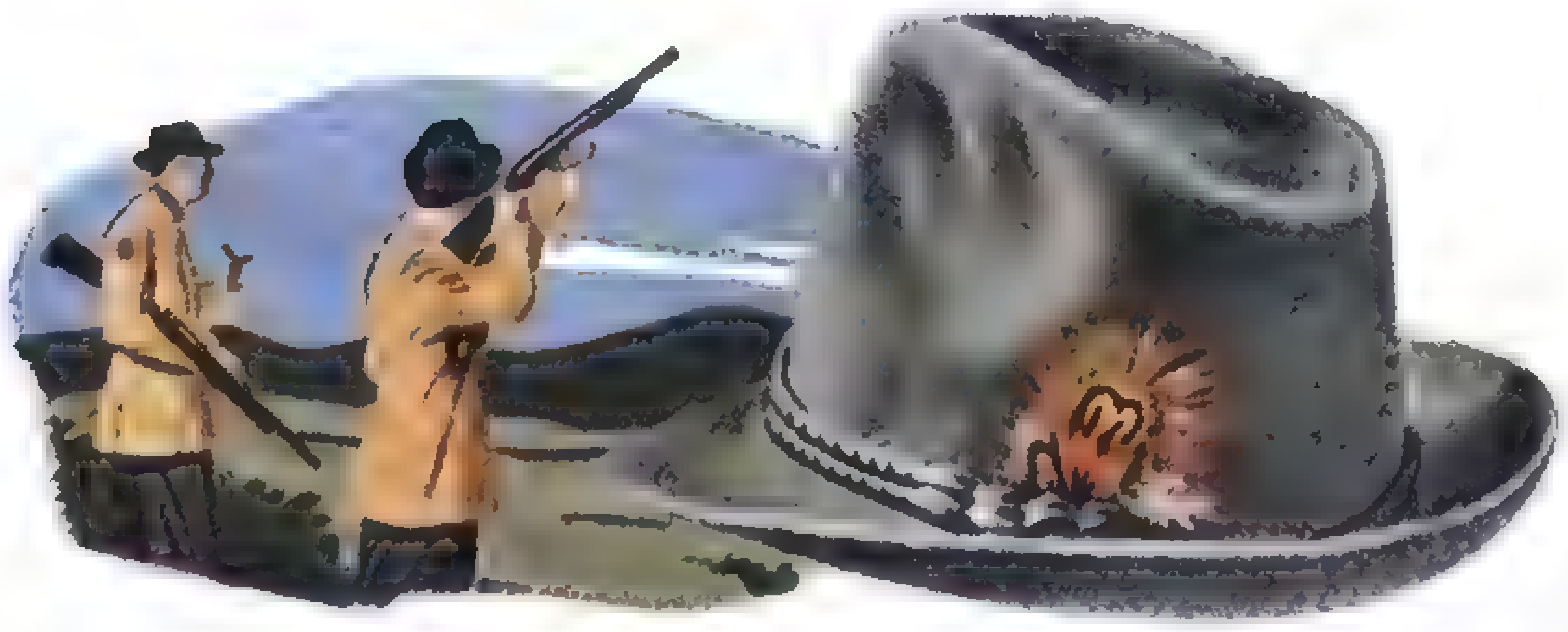
See the spirited looker above . . . saddle stitching, soft suede finish, over the springiest felt that ever held its shape against wind and weather.

Dobbs Gay Prince $20



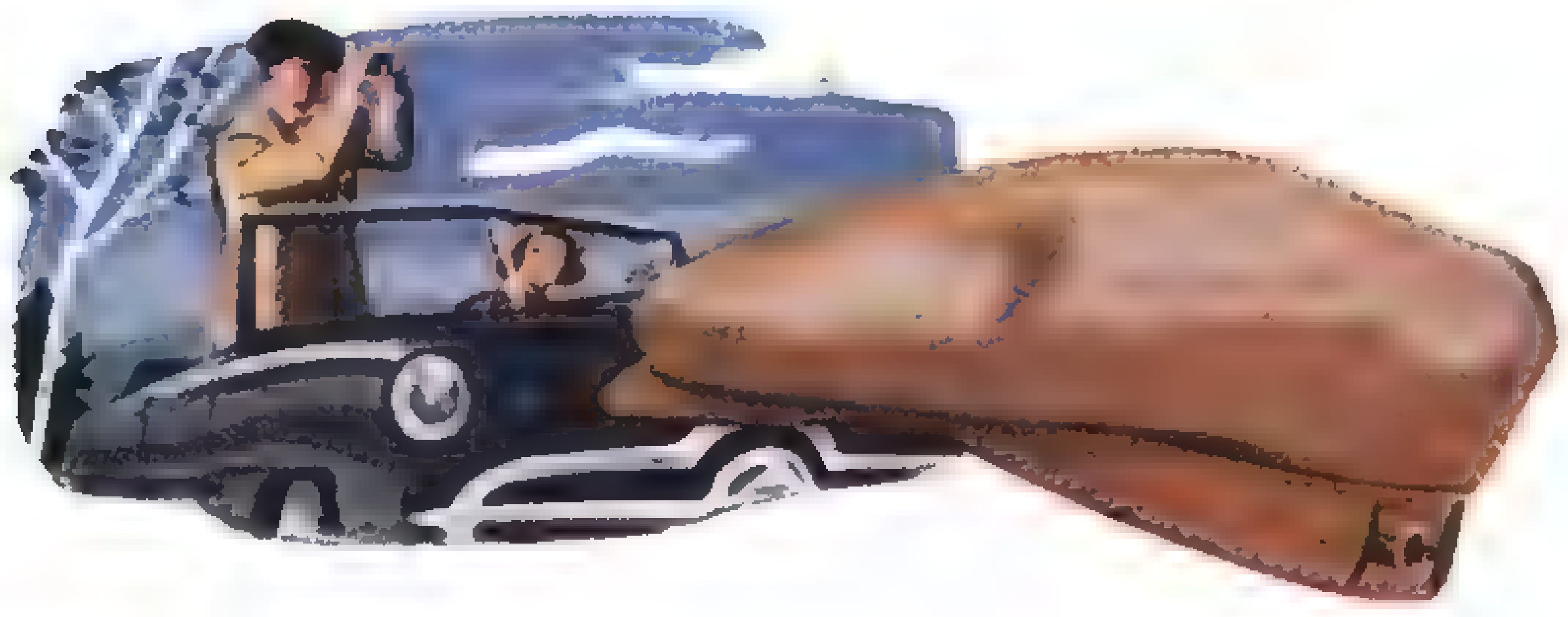
Home on the range and off! Wear this popular Dobbs on prairie or pavement. Looks good all over! Buckskin color. Raw edge and narrow, thong-type band.

Dobbs Rancher $15 to $75



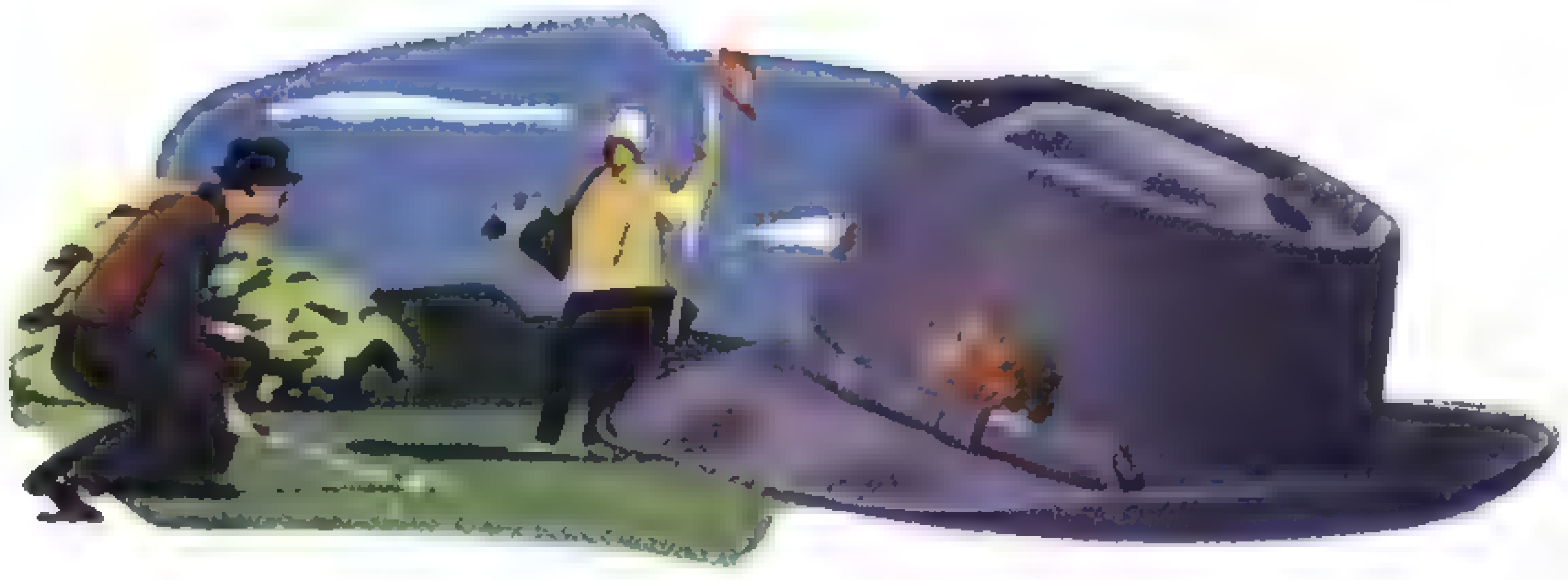
Double-barreled kick is what you'll get out of wearing this bright sportster. It's Dobbs own way of treating the Tyrolean . . . what a treat! High crown, narrow brim, double cord band.

Dobbs Tyrolean $12.50



Easy to see why more and more men are coming back to caps. This Dobbs one-piece cap gives you comfort, good looks, easy-going style. Buckle in back for a neat touch.

Dobbs Whitney Cap $5 and $7.50
Other Dobbs Caps from $3.50



Right in line with your week-end wardrobe. This adaptable Dobbs goes well with you from tee to clubhouse. Luxuriant nap, matching felt band.

Dobbs Jolly Rounder in glove-suede finish $15
Dobbs Country Comfort $12.50

Other Dobbs Hats from $8.50.
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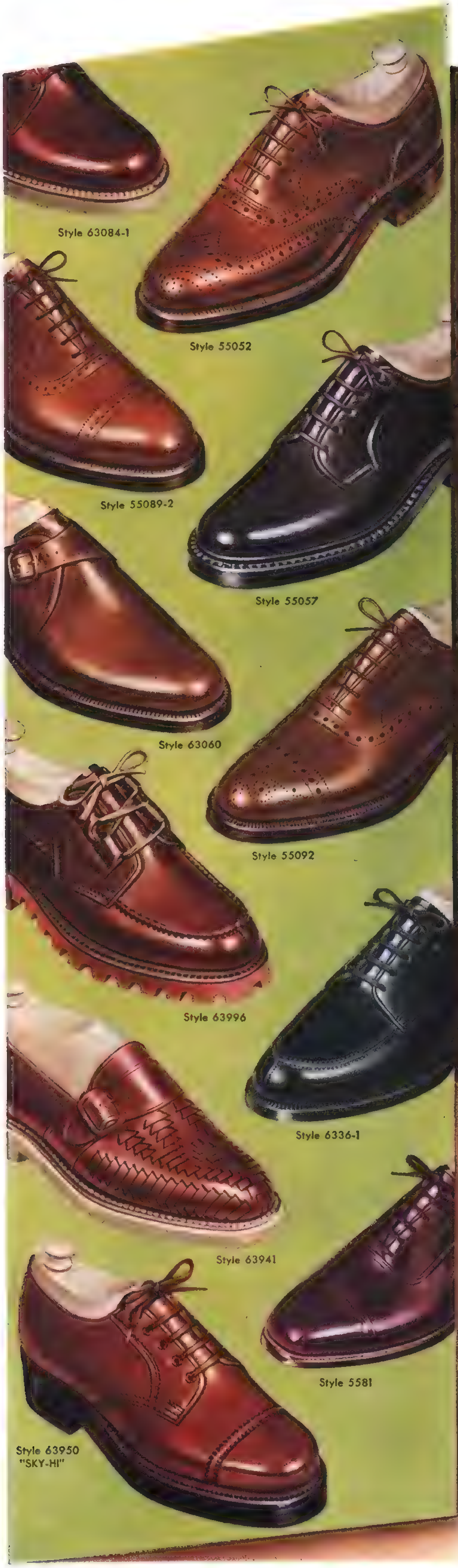
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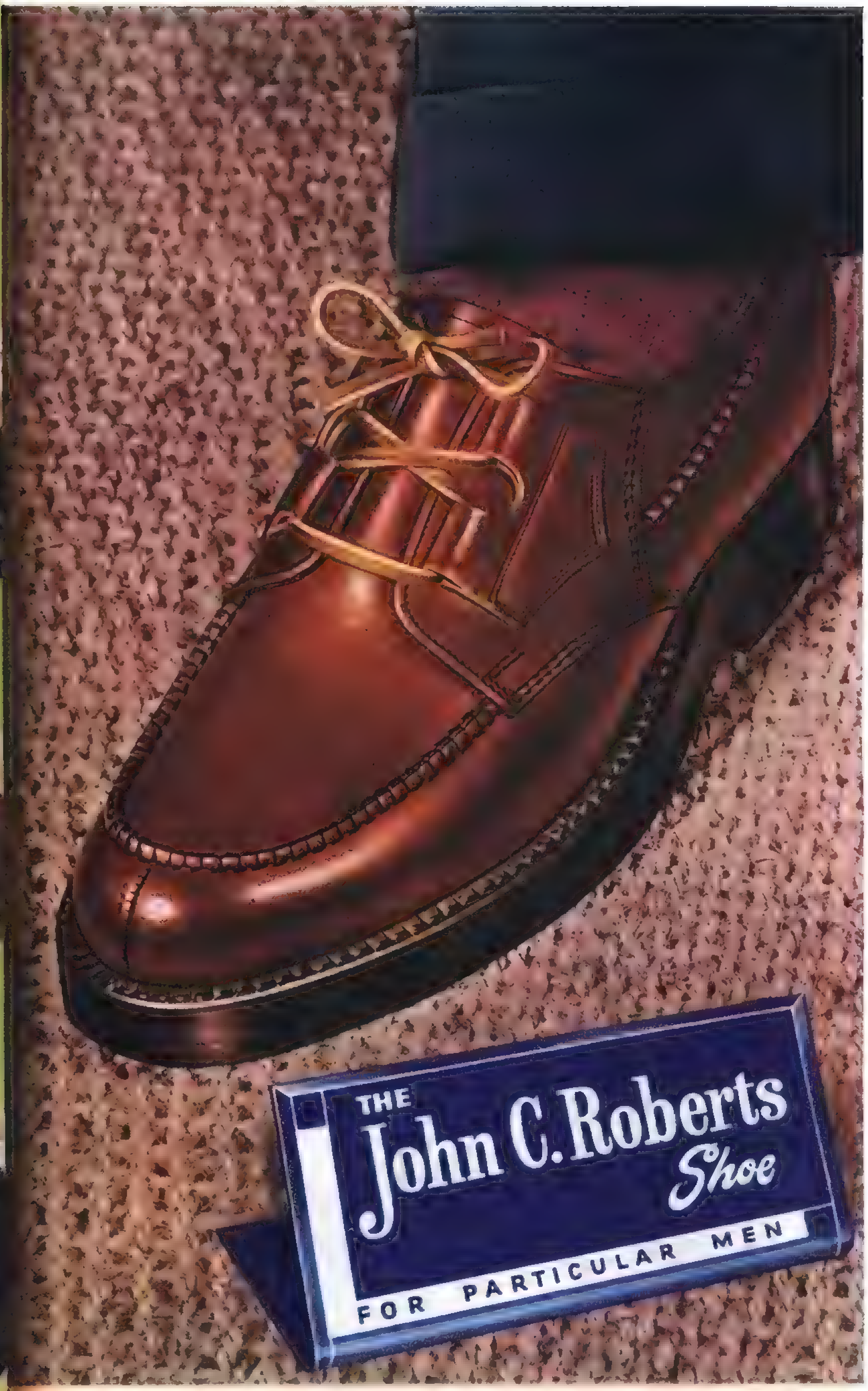
Style 5581
Style 63950
"SKY-HI"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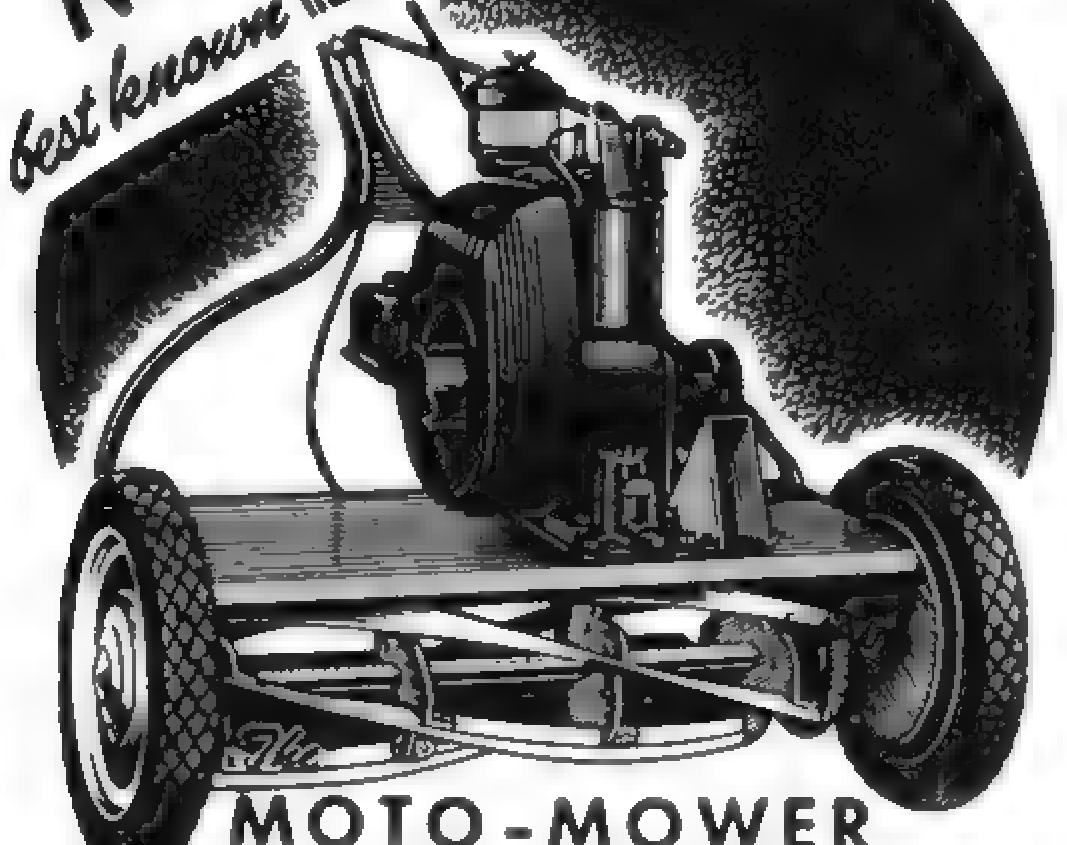
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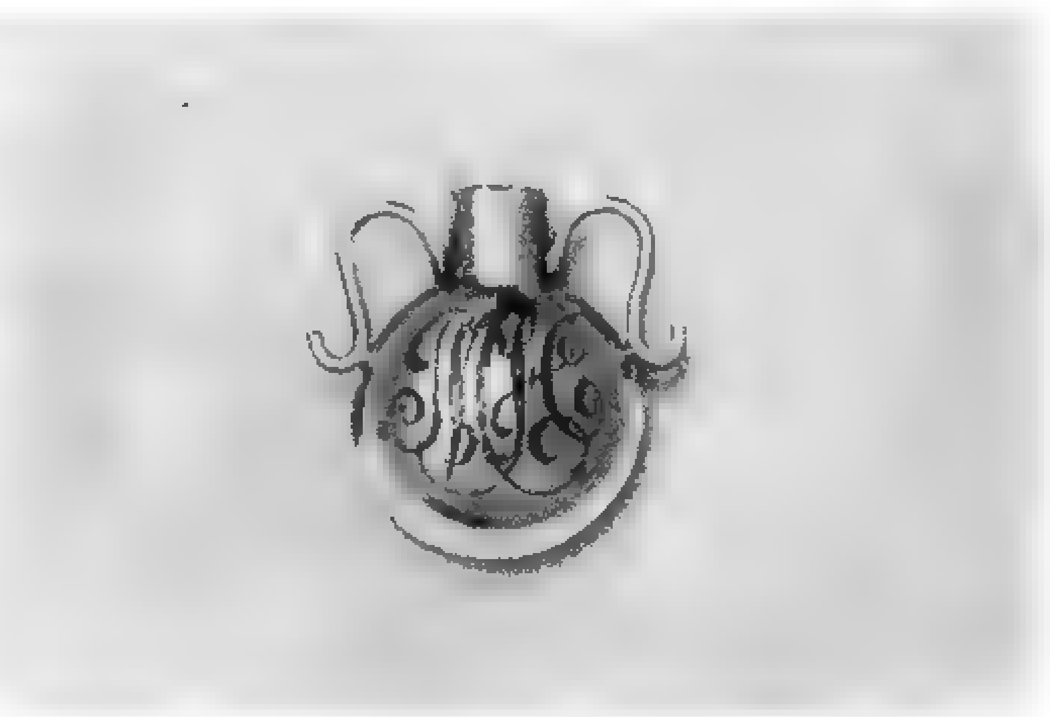

NOT TOO SMALL, not too large (1½") but shapely as a classic Greek jug, this old-fashioned perfume pin will be noticed and admired whenever she wears it. Sterling silver with engraved initials, it is useful as a pin or purely decorative even if she doesn't fill it with scented cotton as ladies used to do.

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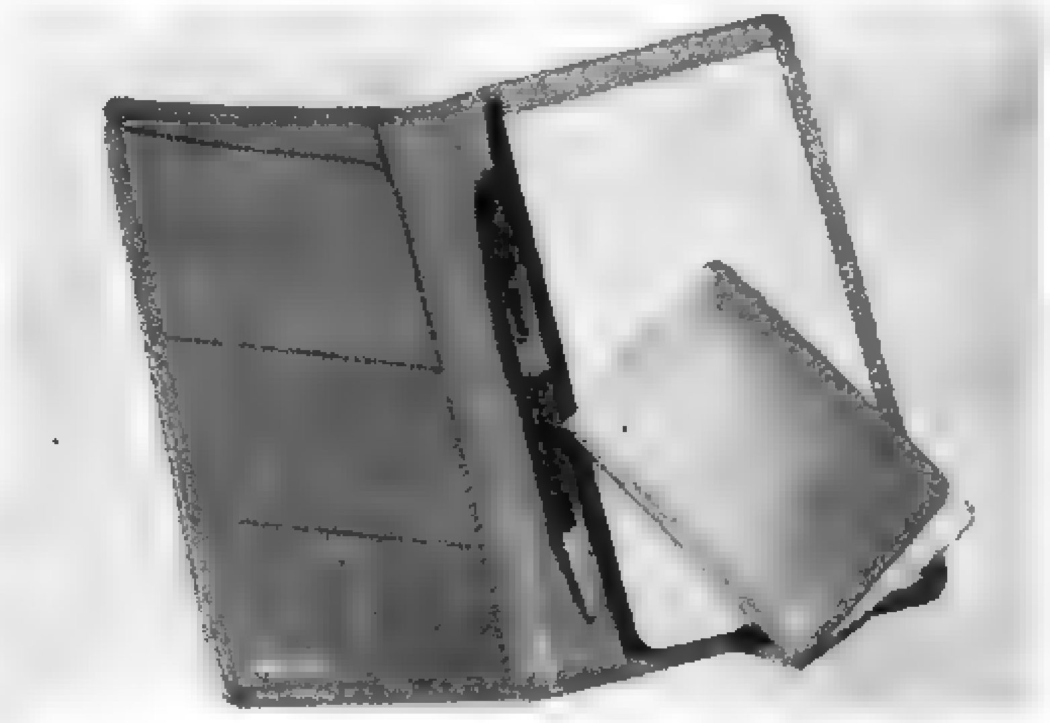

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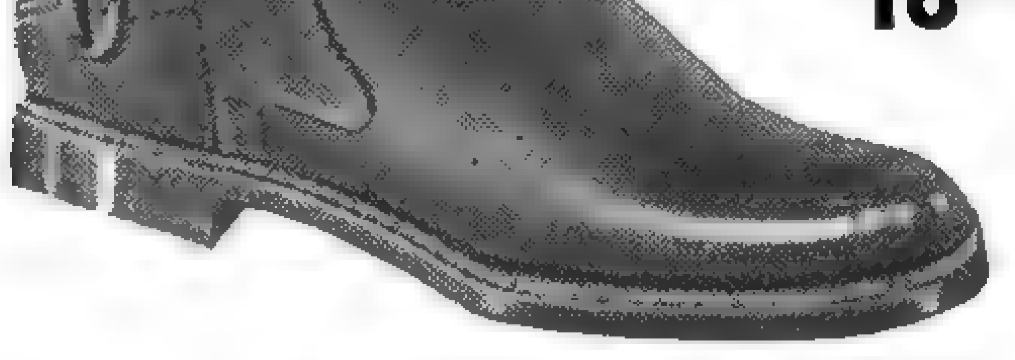

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Of *quality* Lastex; sturdy, resilient, porous, non-chafing. Wide 2-Way Stretch Band *can't* roll, bunch or bind. Soft, smooth, detachable Crotch gives sanitary, super-support. Launders like magic.

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Prevents burns on rugs, bed sheets, furniture
The robot collects ash and butt automatically
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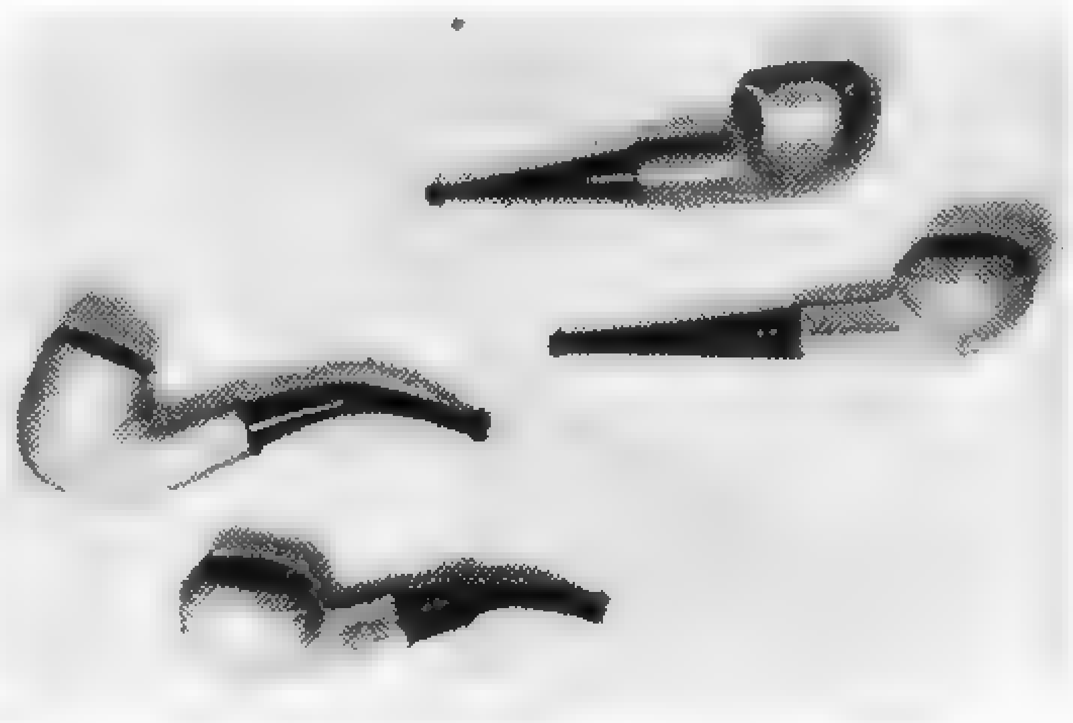
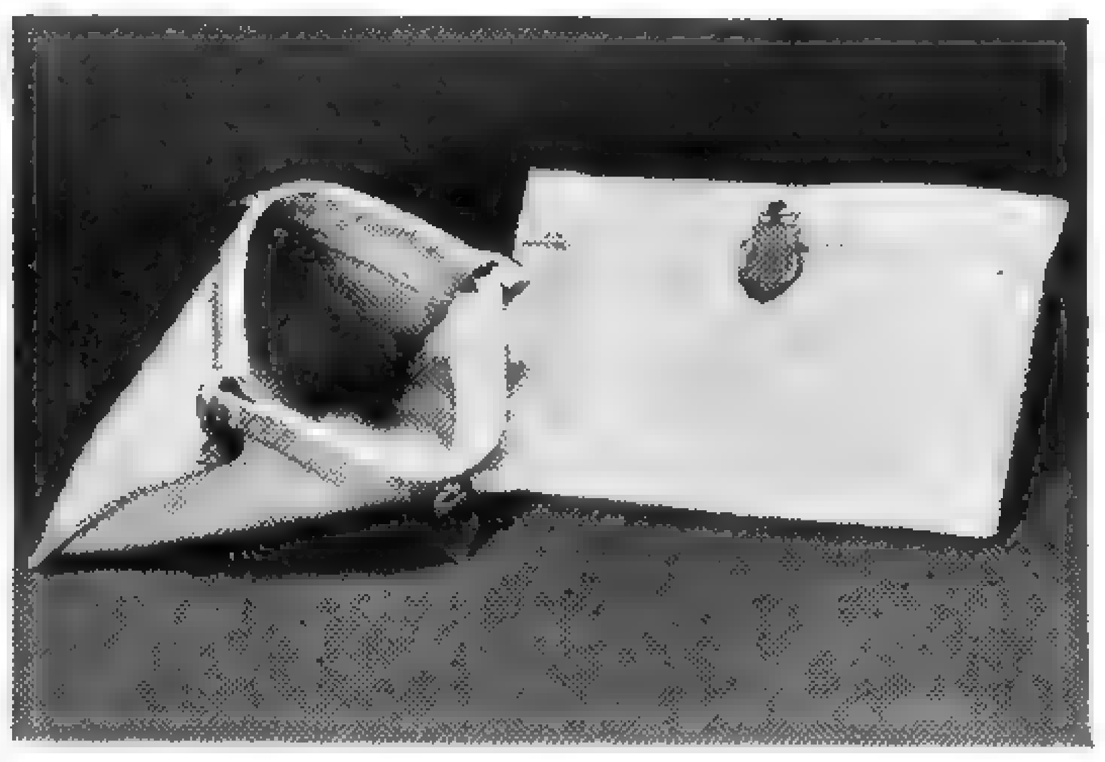
Street ______ E-3
City ______ Zone ___ State ______
Send us the name and address of your favorite Men's Shop

Talking Shop with Esquire

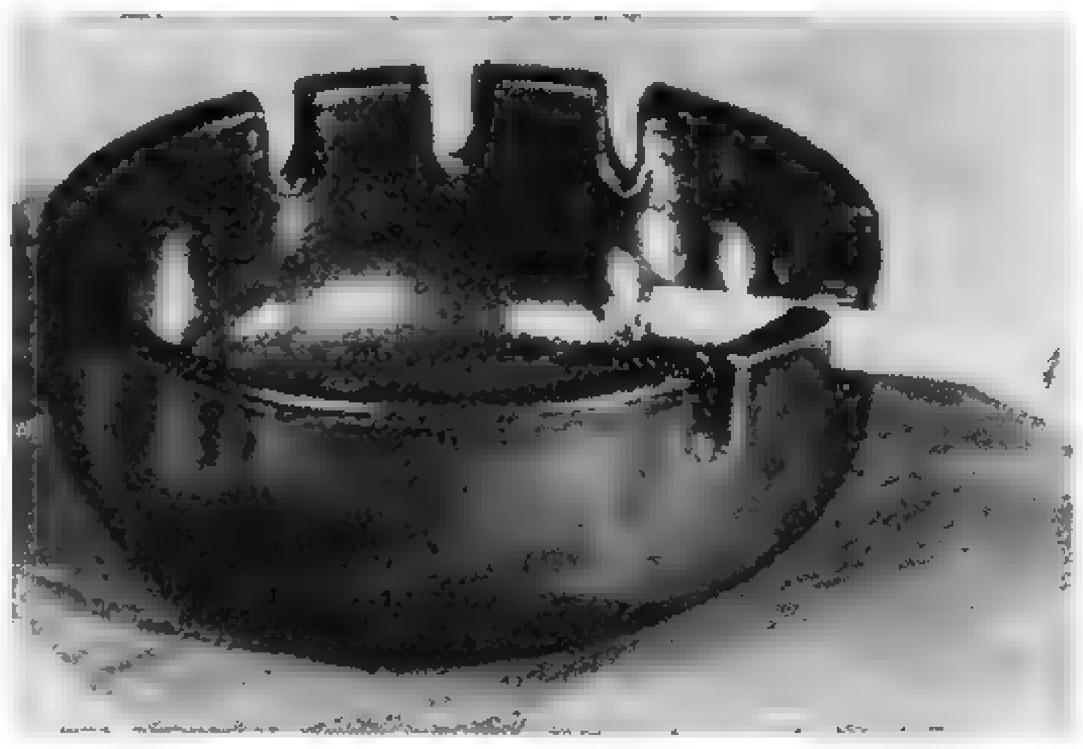
FROM FRANCE comes an unusual variation in pipes. A fine Mediterranean briar bowl covered in natural-colored saddle leather, hand stitched. This is a pipe that combines a graceful line with the maleness of leather. Apart from the special look of quality about it, the bowl never gets more than comfortably warm to hold.

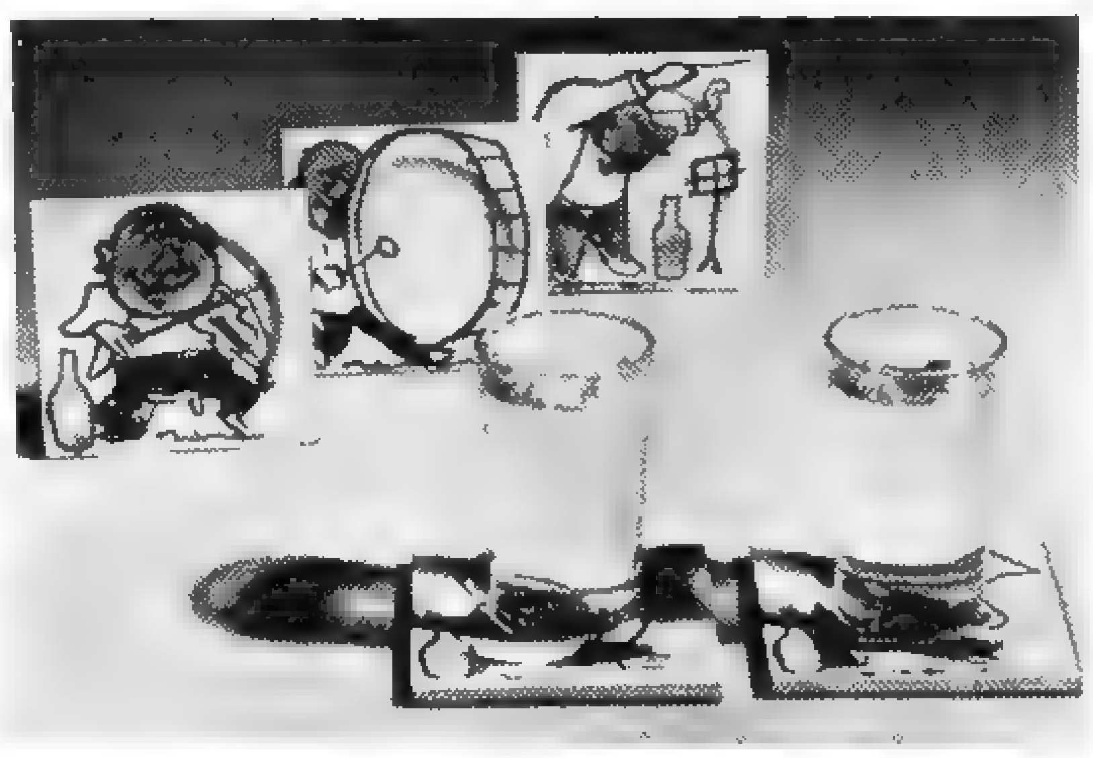




NEAT AND NEW, a glove-leather tobacco pouch that has a simple and efficient way of snapping open and closed. A gentle pull at the tabs snaps it wide open and another gentle push snaps it shut. Air-tight and rubber-lined, it comes in black and natural. It is soft and light and easy to slip into any inside pocket.

MAN-SIZED AND HANDSOME, this California stoneware ash tray has a solid, heavy look. If he smokes while he works, a cigarette left in one of the grooves will not topple off and burn up the furniture. In sand or in gunmetal green, it has the right masculine character for the male sanctuary—office, study or bedroom.





AN AMATEUR FLUTE PLAYER who is a professional painter makes tile coasters: caricatures in black outline filled in with color. The red-faced fiddler with the bottle beside him, the benign drummer, the frenzied conductor with the dark mustachios and at least a dozen others are as amusing as they are useful.

Ranger

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Extravagant Price does not make a Perfume "Great"

What is a "GREAT PERFUME?"

In "An Open Letter About Perfume"* I have explained how to choose a "good" perfume. It is more difficult, however, to explain what is a "great" perfume and how to recognize it.

It is just as complex to explain what makes a perfume "great" as it is to explain what makes a piece of music or a painting a masterpiece.

High price does not make a "great" perfume, nor even a "good" perfume.

It is true that a "good" and a "great" perfume can be made only at a price (because its making requires first class essential oils and other ingredients which are often very costly), but this price need not be extravagant.

A GREAT PERFUME must be refined and give you a feeling of beauty and happiness.

A GREAT PERFUME should be an "original" fragrance, and not merely a variation on the same theme. It should be as different as L'Origan is from L'Aimant.

A GREAT PERFUME must have a remarkable unity of odor, by which we mean that not even the most sensitive nose should be able to distinguish any specific component of the perfume. Furthermore, it should maintain this unity of odor as it "diffuses" in the open and with time. At no time may it lose its beauty and refinement.

A GREAT PERFUME will awaken in us the sentiment of mystery and rejoice our heart.

A GREAT PERFUME is lasting, yet gives one always a feeling of beauty, of joy, and refinement.

A GREAT PERFUME like a masterpiece in all other arts, wins the recognition of the public and *stands the test of time.*

NEVER FORGET THAT YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED BY YOUR PERFUME.

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**Anyone wishing a copy of "An Open Letter About Perfume" may secure it by writing to Coty, Inc., 730 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N. Y., Attention Miss I. Florian.*

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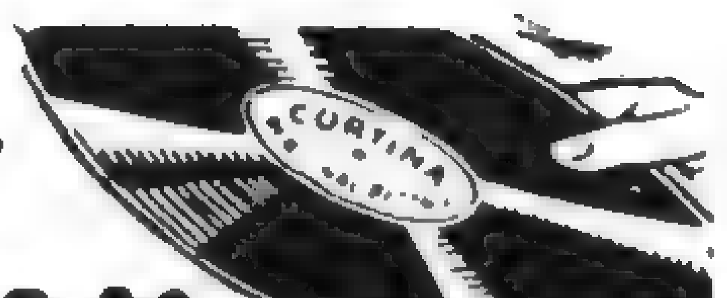

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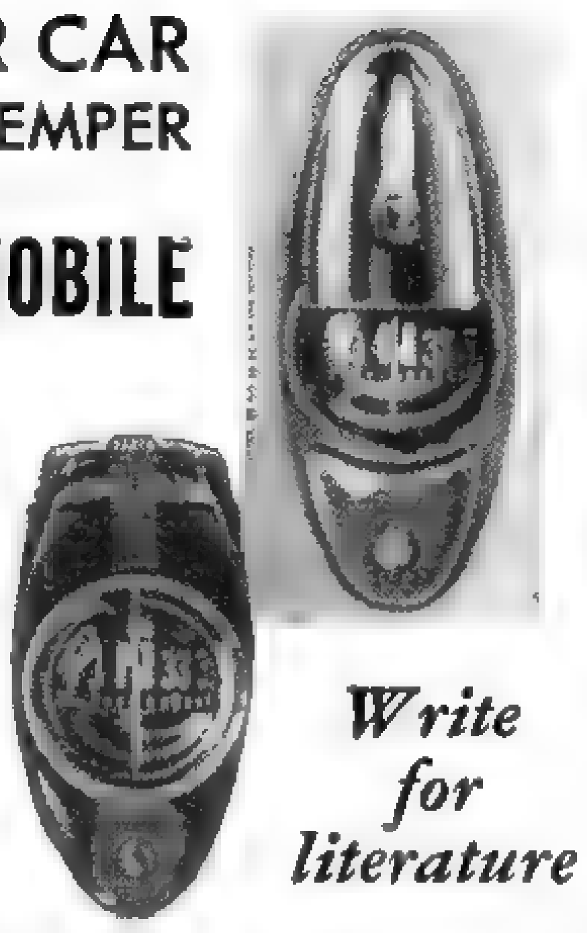
Wrong turns mean lost miles . . . time and driving pleasure. Be right, every time, with a Hull Automobile Compass. BEACONLITE illuminated, $5.95. STREAMLINE standard $3.95. At your dealer's.



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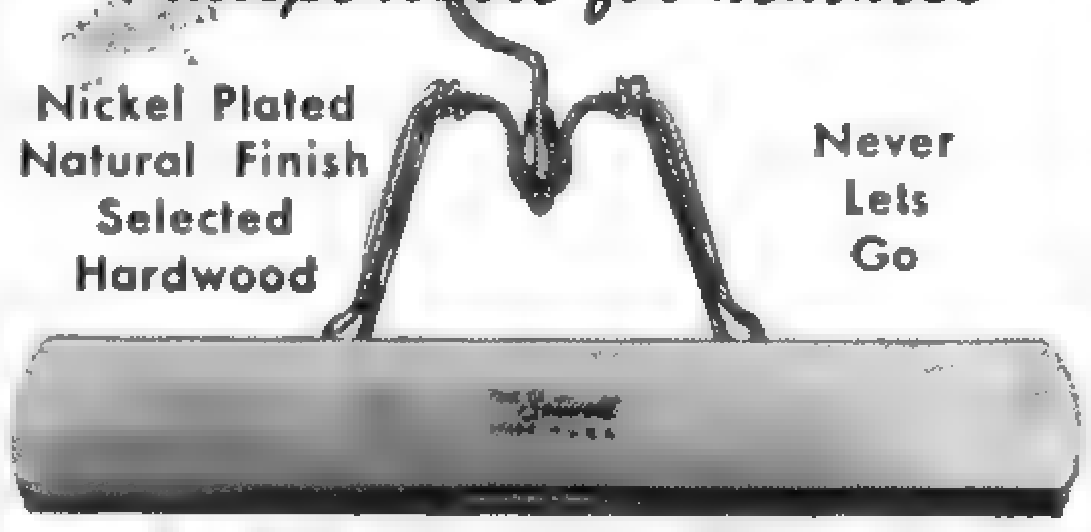

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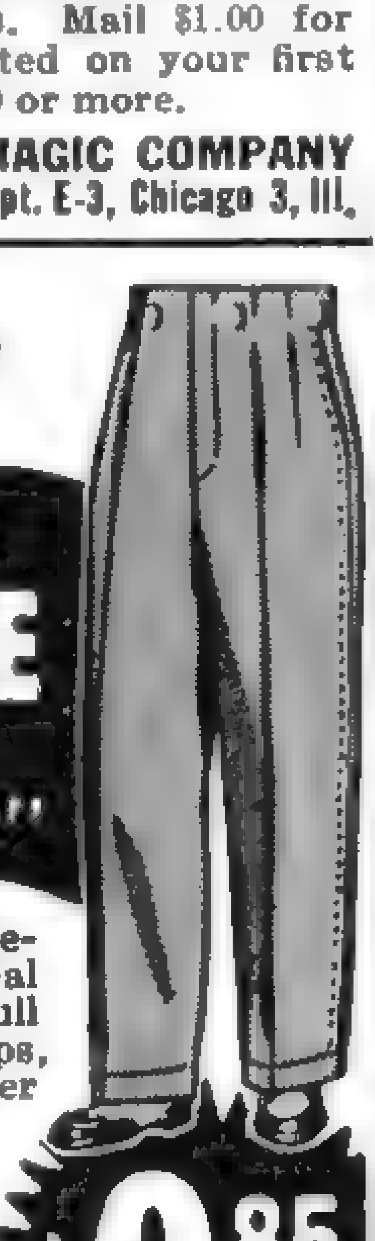

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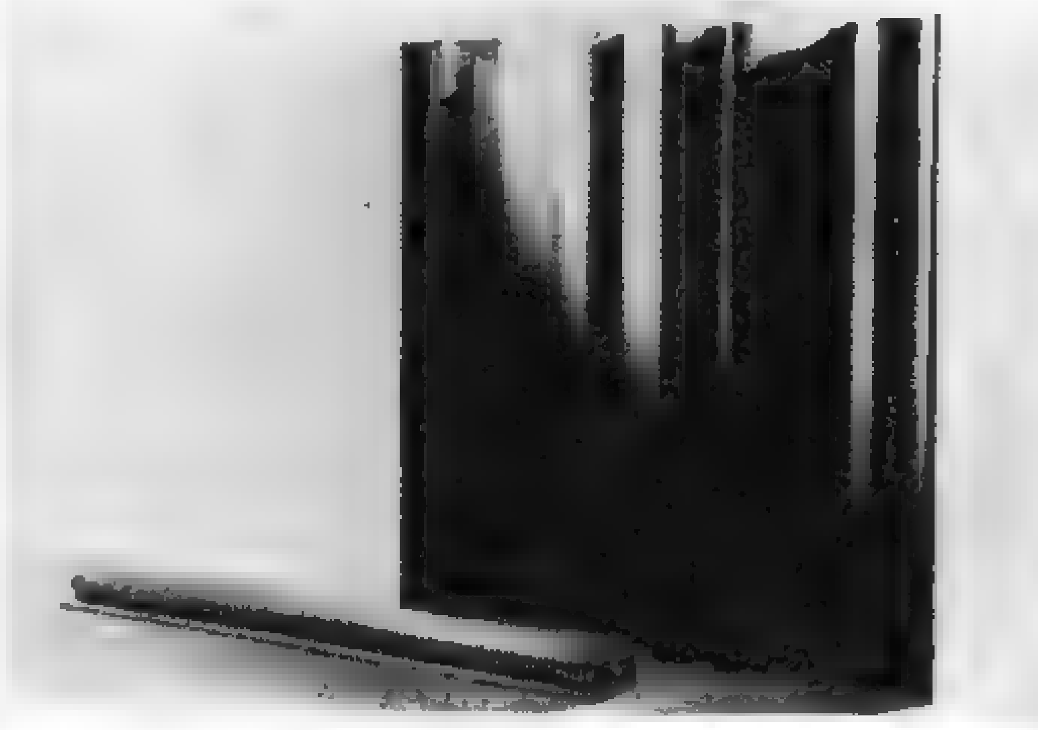
SEND ONLY $1

with name, waist size (28 to 42), 1st and 2nd color choice (Blue, Brown, Tan or Gray.) Pay postman balance plus C.O.D. charge. Or send full price and we pay postage. Order yours now!

LINCOLN TAILORS Dept. ES-3 Lincoln, Nebr.
Growing continuously more than 50 years

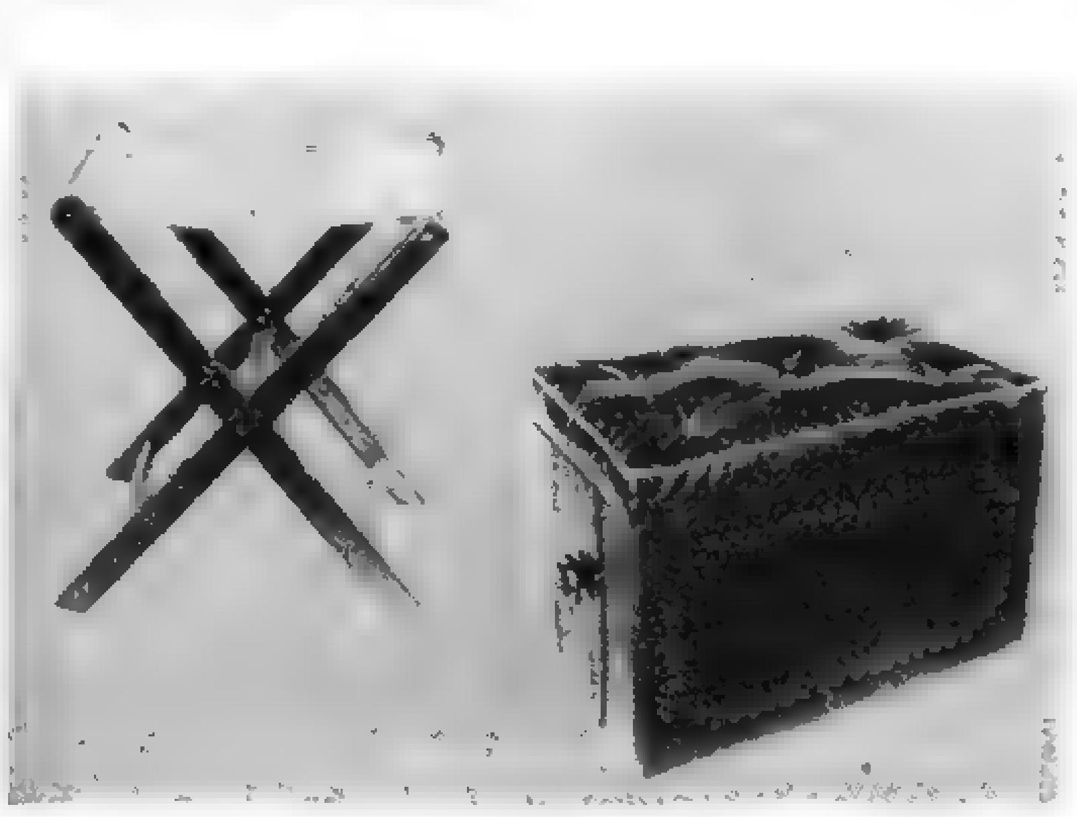
Talking Shop with Esquire

PEACE IN THE BEDROOM. If someone flies into a rage every time you want to keep the light on for reading, the solution is to get yourself a lamp that fits right on the book and casts its bright light nowhere but on the pages. Other than resolving quarrels, it can stand on the bedside table as a night light.



FLEXIBILITY is one advantage of this excellent screen. It can separate your kitchenette from your living room or help in some other way to make a small space more liveable. Wooden slats ⅜" wide are sturdily woven together to your specifications of height or length. Rolled up, it takes up almost no space at all.

A STEADY FLAME at the end of an arm-long lighter is an improvement on penny matches for starting a fire in an oil stove, oven or wood-burning fireplace. Just slide back the barrel and automatically you have a four-inch flame. It comes in brass and in colors, also in lengths of 12, 24 and 30 inches.



BOX SEATS for evenings when friends crowd round the television set. Five sturdy, folding stools are stored in this upholstered Leatherette chest. On the chest itself there is ample room for two. A neat arrangement that makes it unnecessary to haul chairs from all over the house to get everybody comfortable.

Ranger

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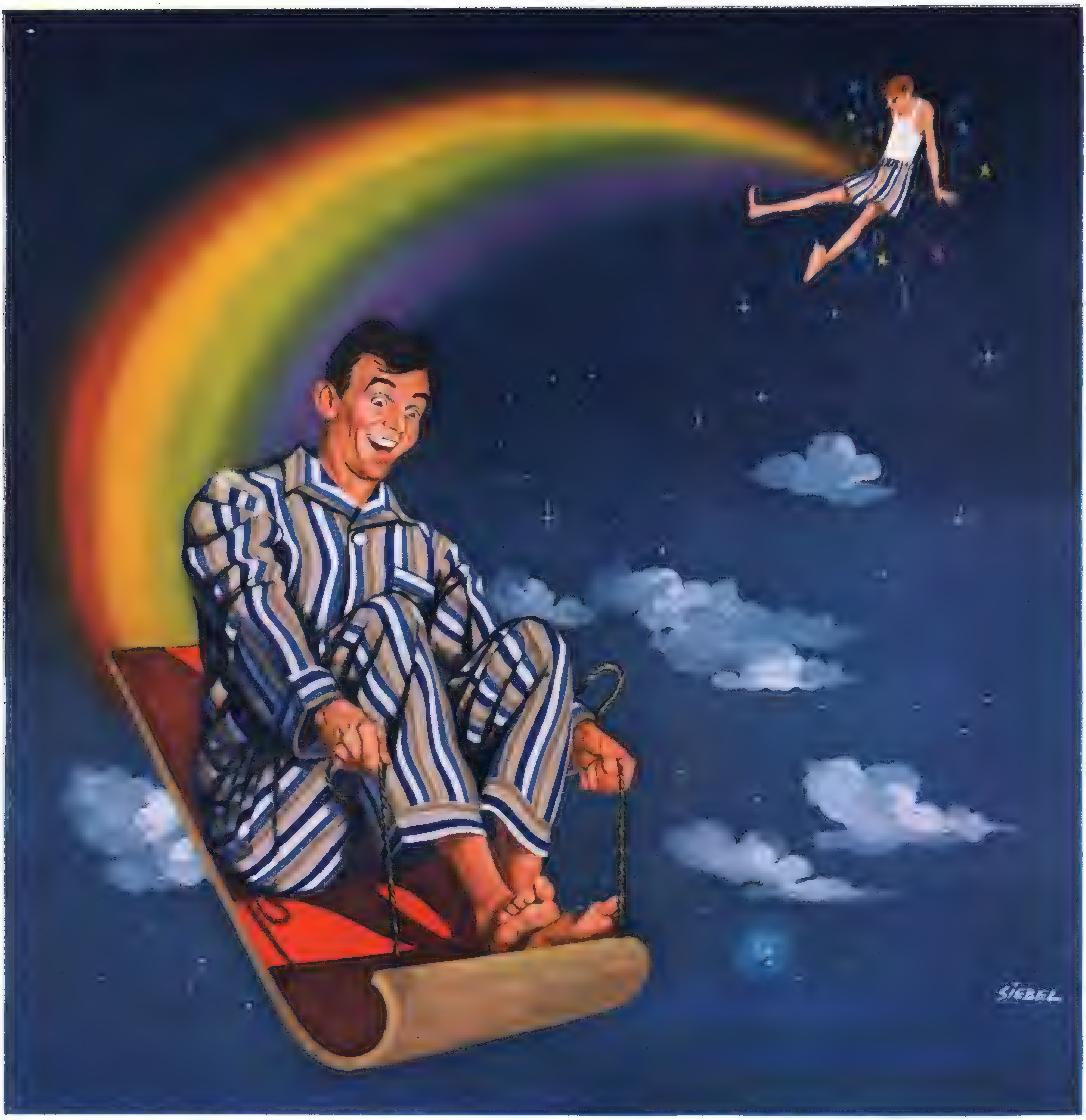

"Colortones" Textron's rainbow striped notched collar Sanforized cotton pajamas, $5.00
Matching boxer shorts $1.50 and tailored cotton undershirts, $.85

TEXTRON'S "Colortones" are Riding High

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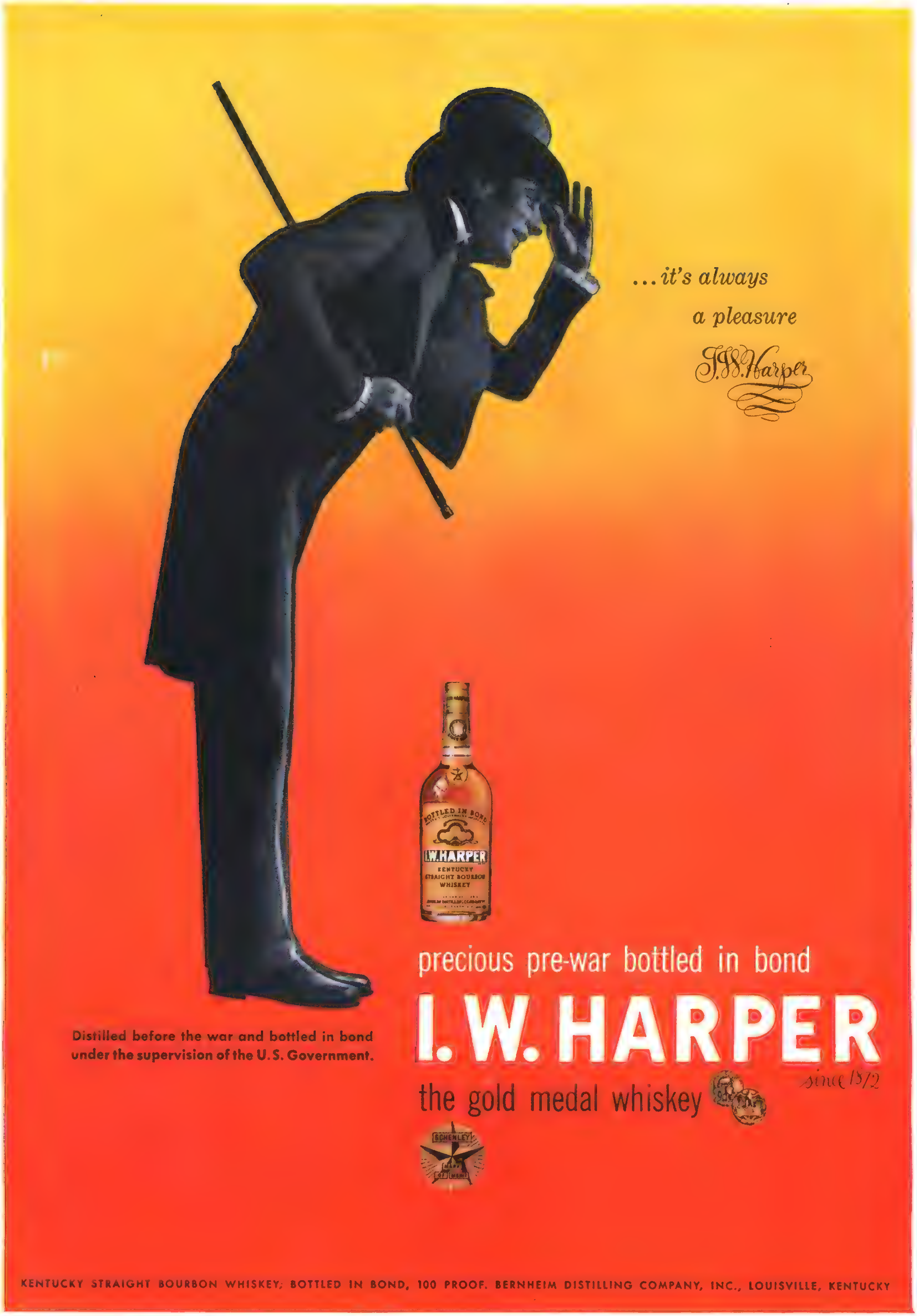

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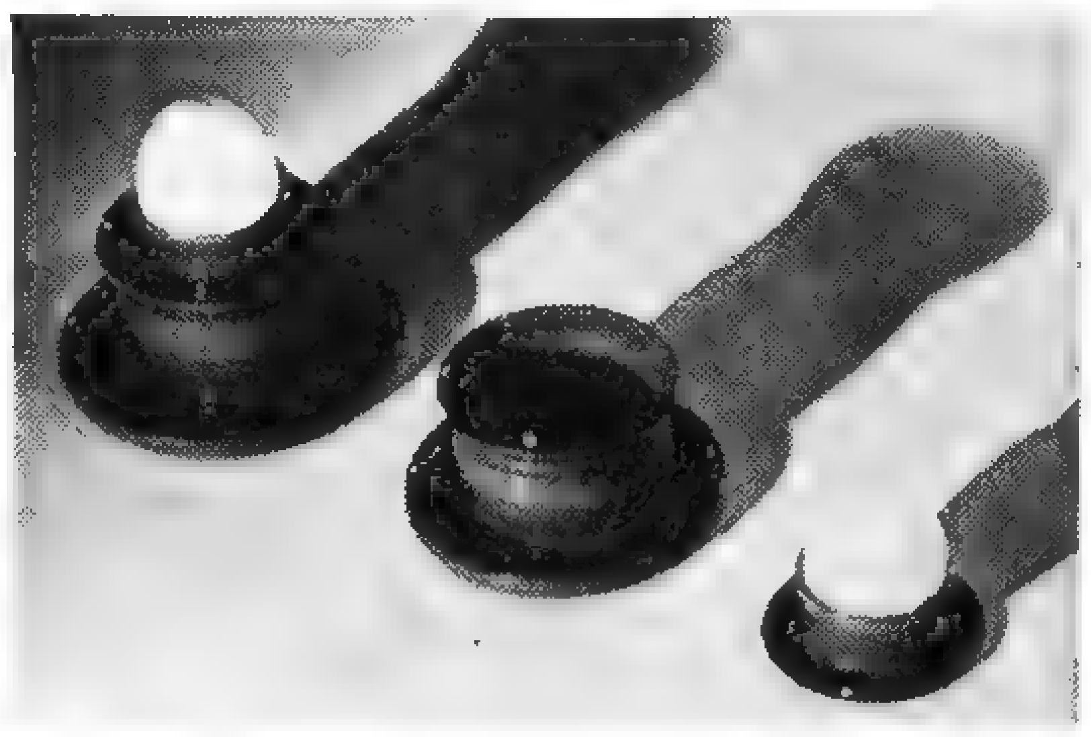
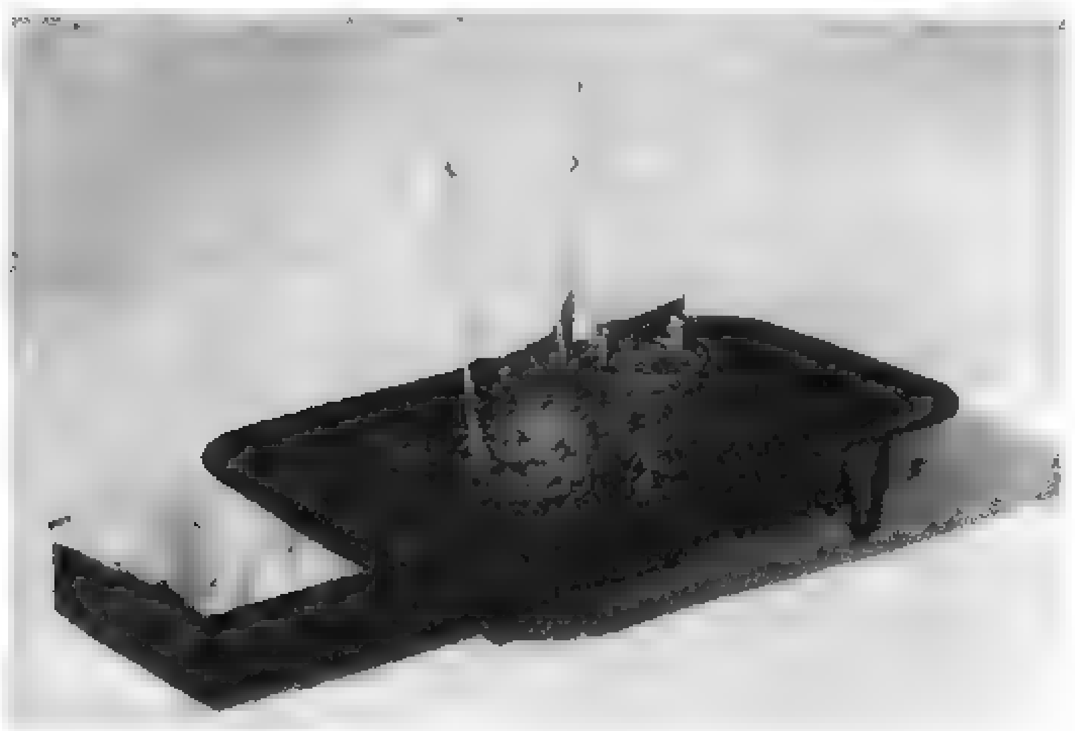
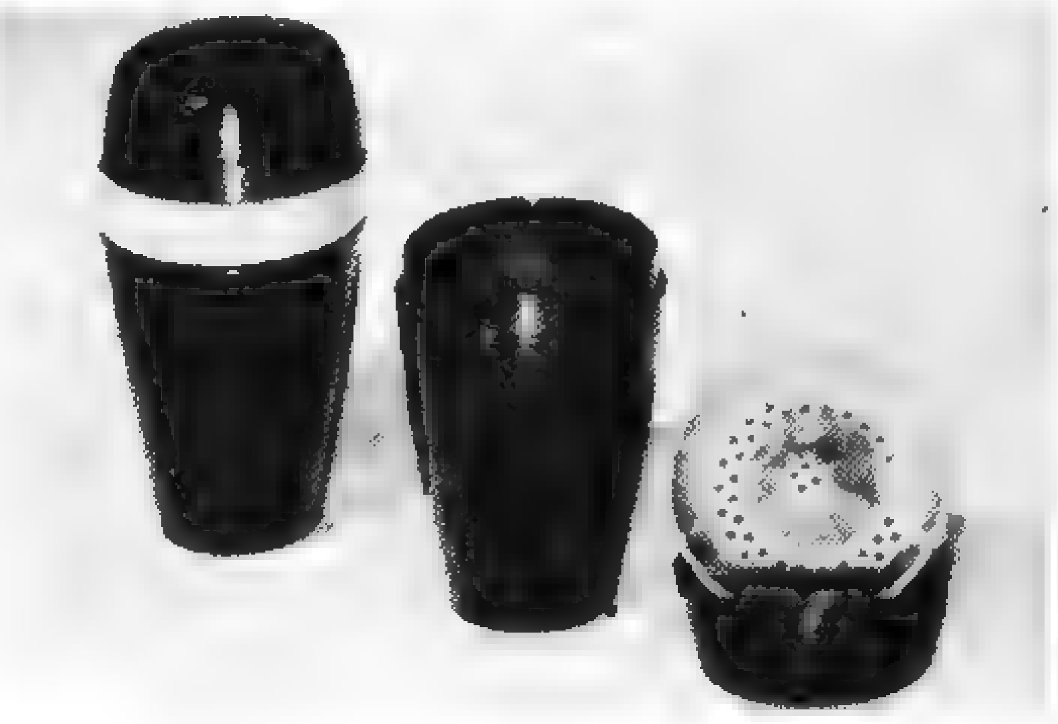
Talking Shop with Esquire



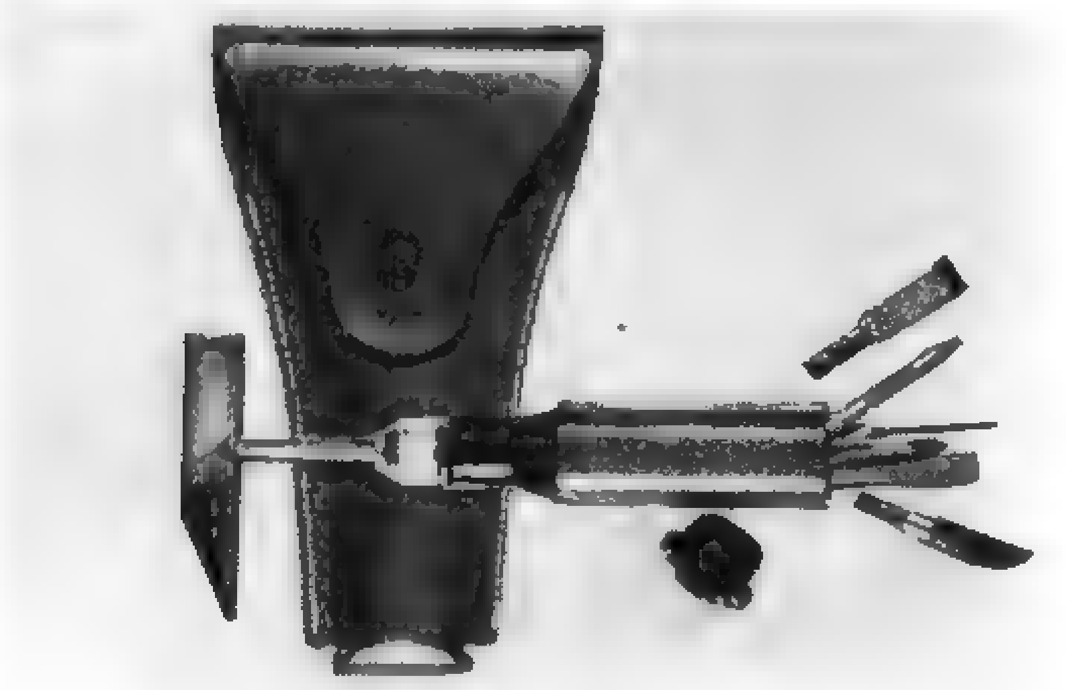
NO DAINTY DISH this but a reasonable cup for a man to eat eggs out of in the morning: out of the shell in one part or turned out into the other part. If he hates eggs, he will use the large part for jellies and jams, the other for hot mustard. Ovenware, in colors, the parts are available separately or together.



A USEFUL VARIATION on the familiar household tray is one with a drawer attached. The drawer slides out from under and is convenient for cocktail napkins, coasters and such. Hand-painted, lightweight metal in maroon, black and pastels. Seems like a sensible arrangement for serving snacks or breakfast in bed.



A MAN'S KITCHEN ought to be efficiently equipped. An item smartly designed and capable of a variety of operations is this plastic shaker, juicer and strainer included. The juicer upside down is a strainer for martinis or anything else. It comes in black with the juicer-strainer part in a contrast color.



POCKET-SIZED KIT to make you indispensable round the house. This neat 4½" cowhide case contains a claw hammer with a leather-covered hollow handle. Inside the handle are five different tool heads that fit on to the handle instead of the hammer. You might at last hang that picture or fix that broken door knob.

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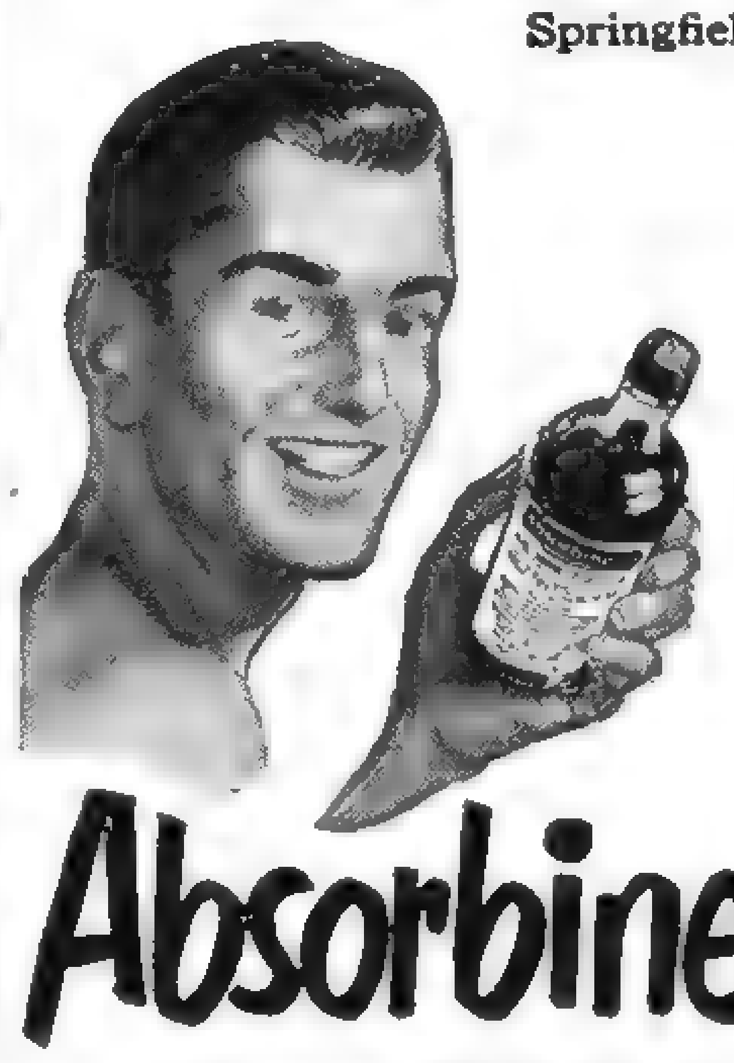

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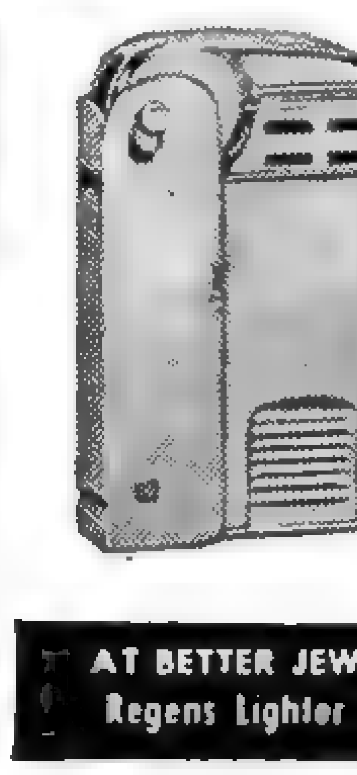

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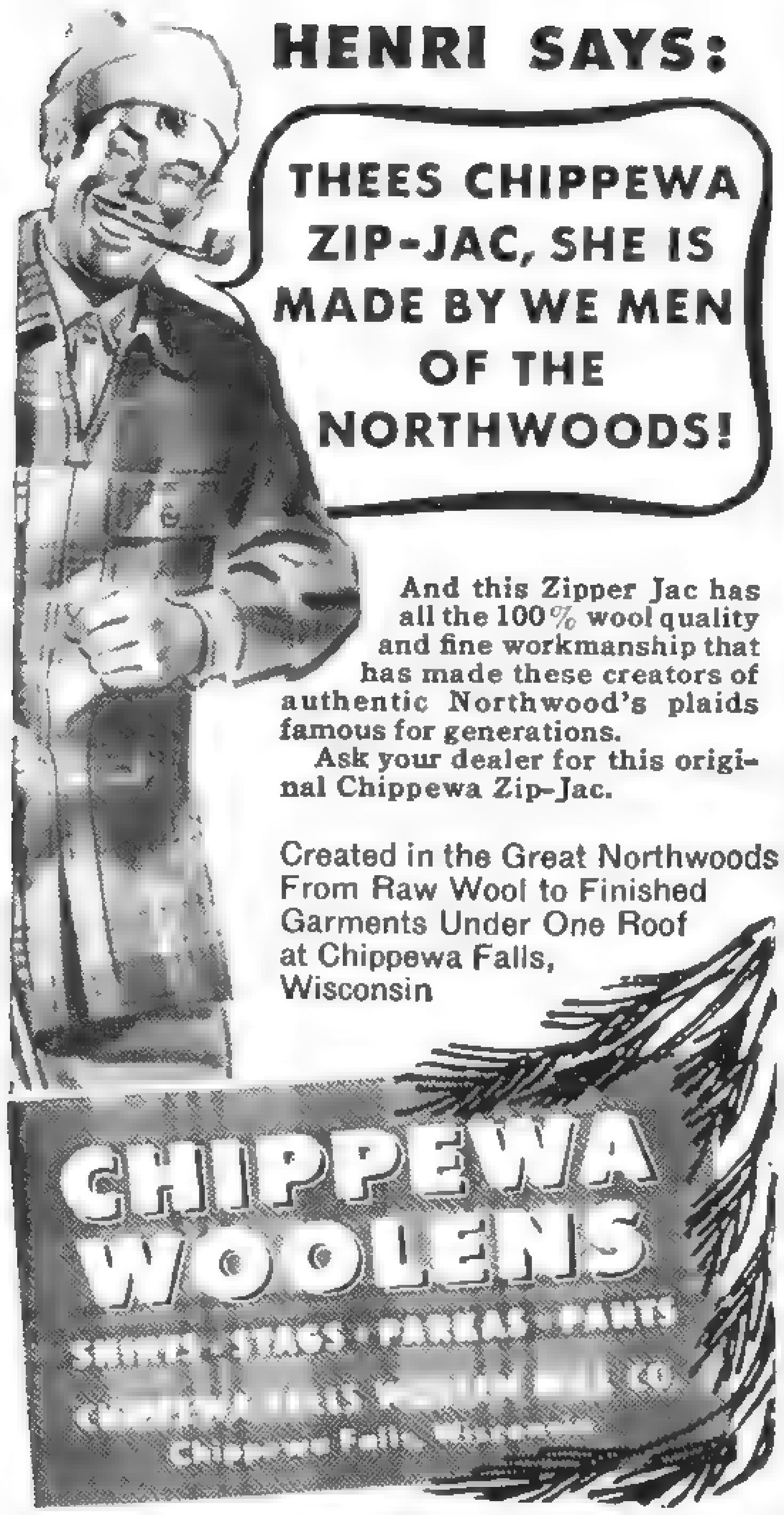

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THE PERFECT
18½" PLASTIC HANGER
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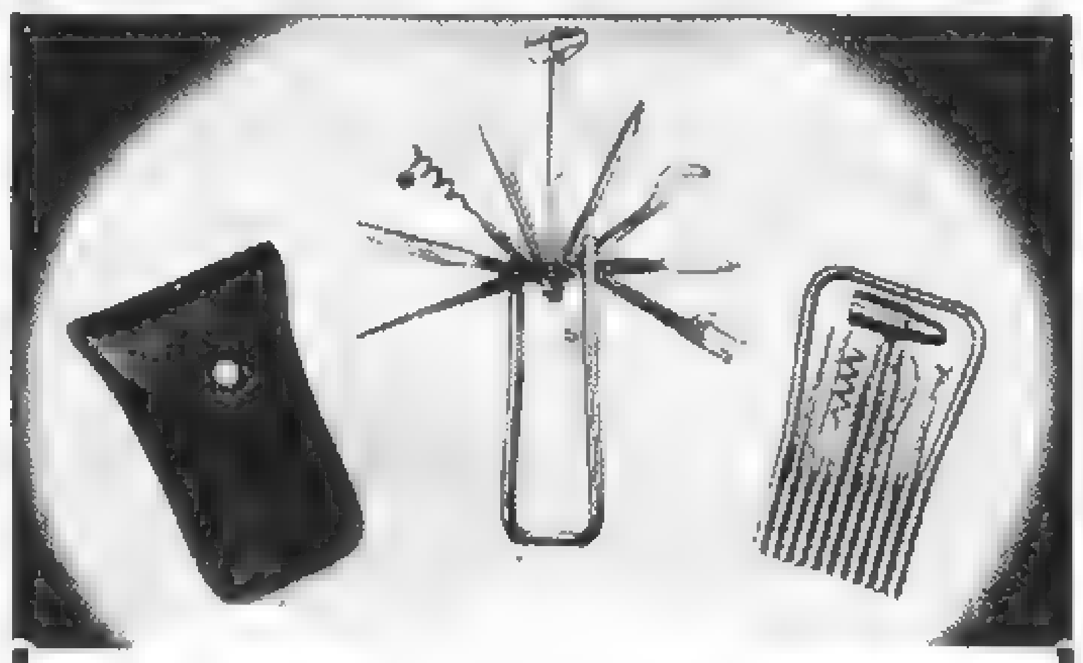

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These compact tools do a man-size job from opening bottles to scaling fish. Actually 9 tools in 1. Made of high-carbon cutlery steel. The frame acts as the handle. When closed, measures 2¼" x 3⅛". You'll want a kit for the kitchen, cellar, picnic basket, glove compartment of car or for the perfect practical gift. Complete with handsome cowhide case stamped with your initials in 24 K gold. When ordering, please state initials. *No C.O.D.'s*.

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GUARANTEED FOR LIFE—WILL NEVER BURN OUT

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Send check, money order or cash. I pay postage. C.O.D. orders filled plus C. O. D. charges. Write for free catalogue of pipes and cigars.

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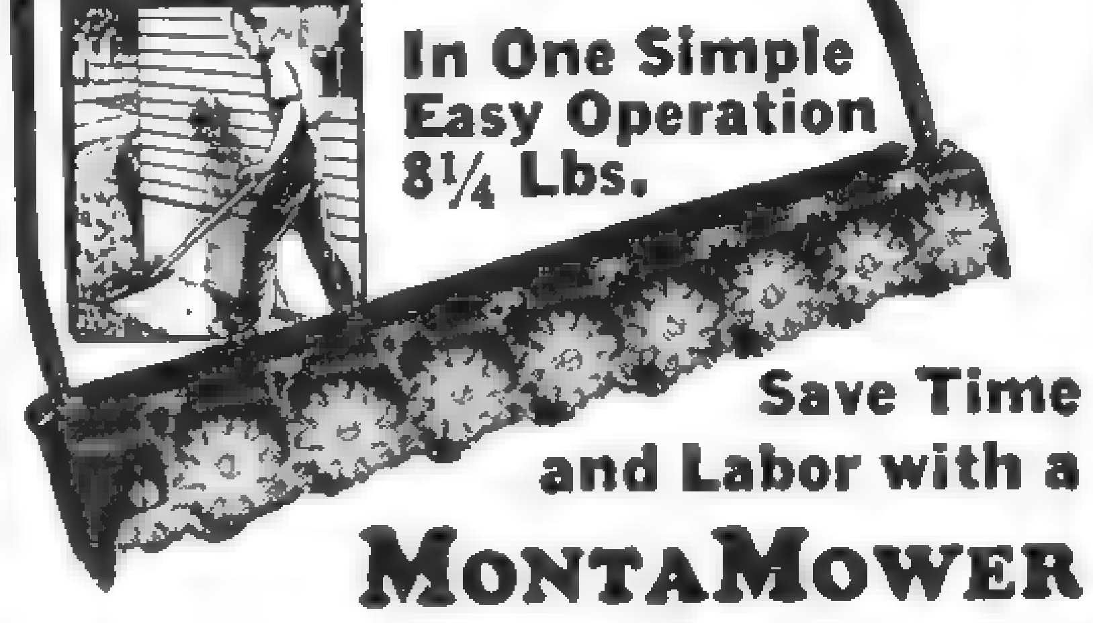

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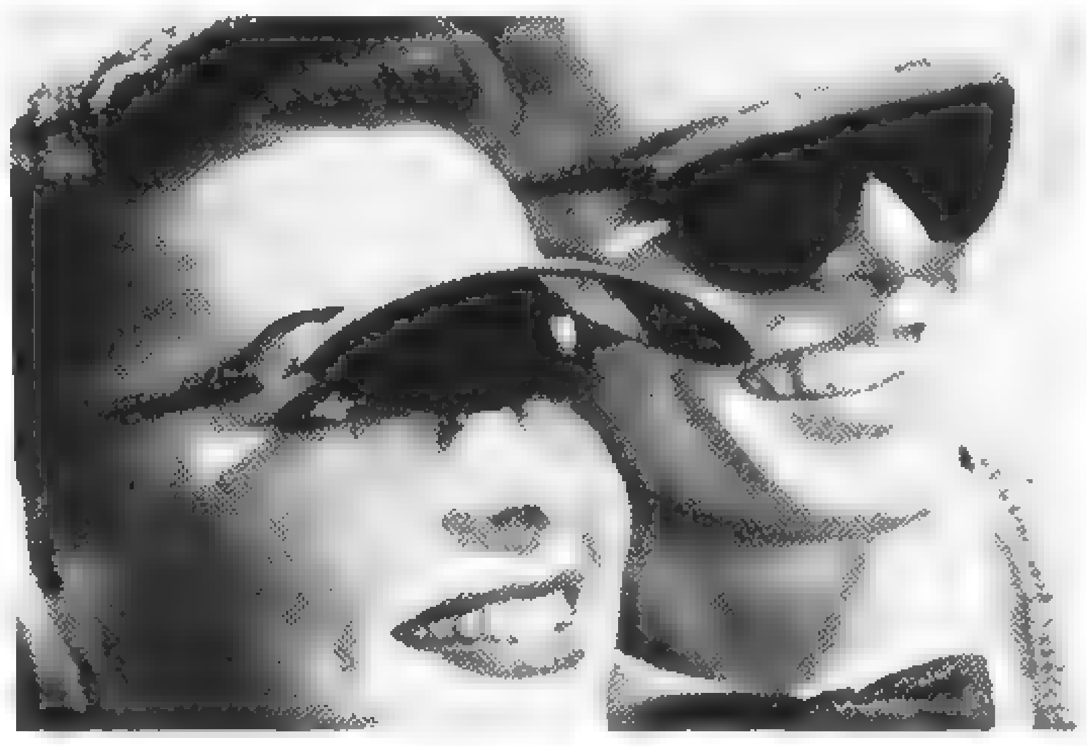
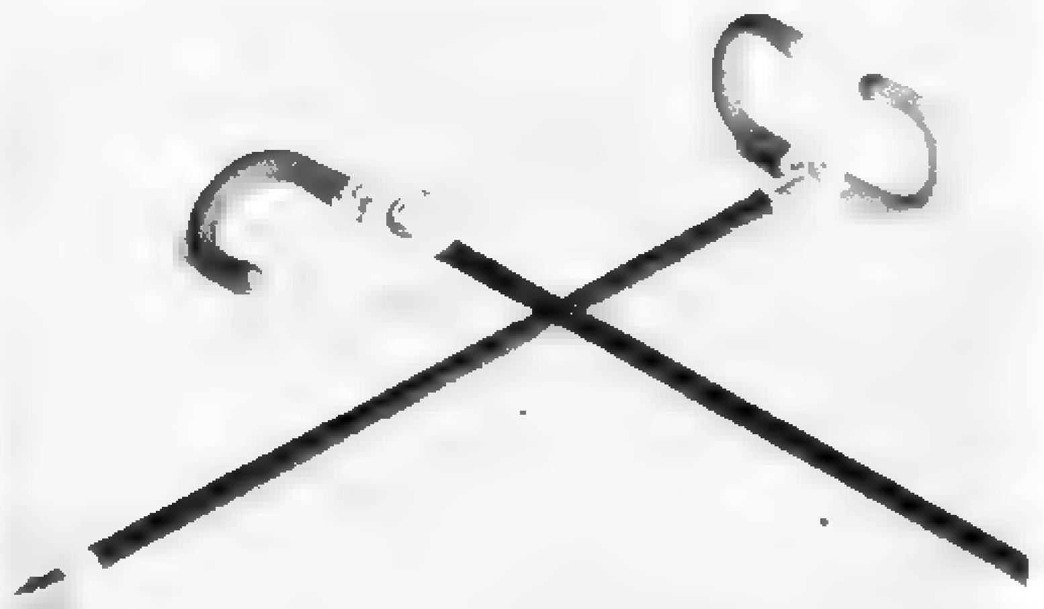
Talking Shop with Esquire

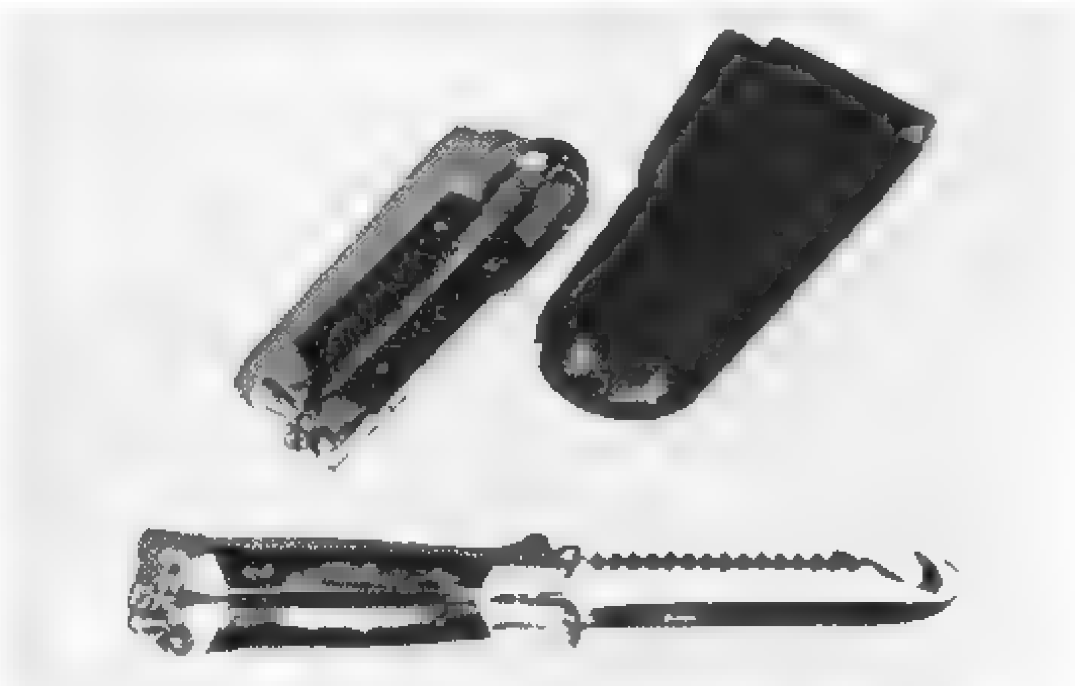
THREE WAY GLASSES for outdoor fans worn up, down or slanted. Slanted they act as a visor or eye shade; up, they are out of the way for reading maps or looking for the ignition key; down, they give protection against glare. Temples and bars are white amber, green or red Tenite, Lightweight and not easily breakable.

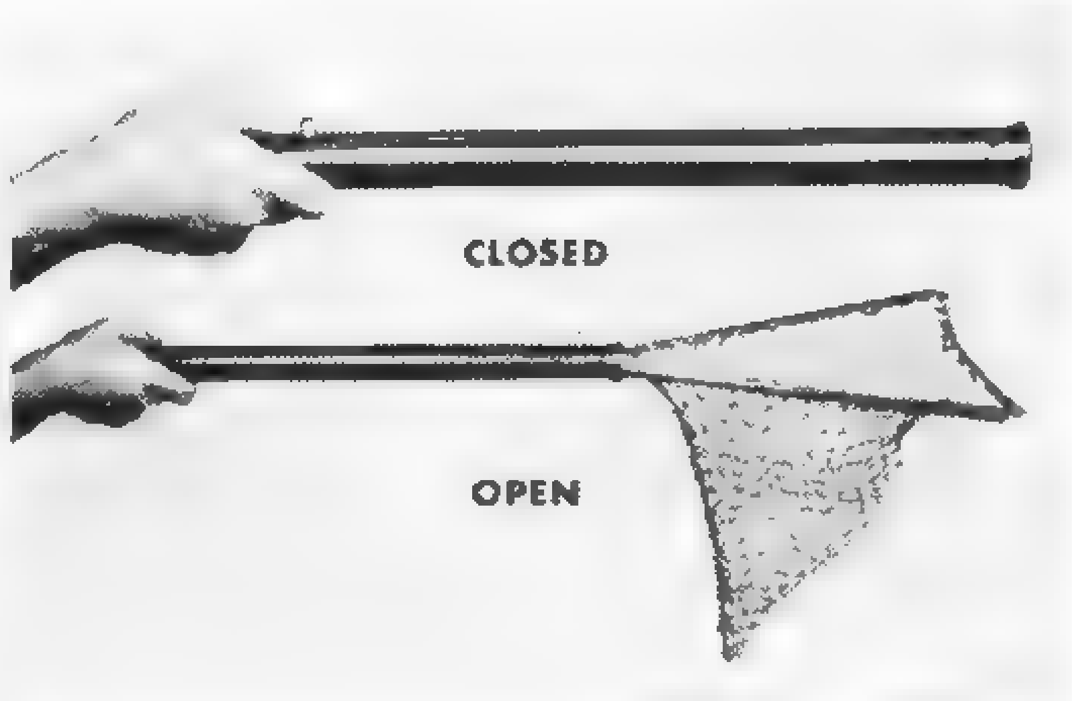




AT THE RACES, watching a golf tournament or on a walk in the country, a seat cane is the thing to take along. When your feet get tired and you begin to wish you had never started out, open the handle of the cane and sit yourself down for a rest. The seat cane is a wise old idea with an ever-useful purpose.

A GOOD GRIP, nice construction and working edges that a fisherman needs—a knife to please anyone who goes out with rod and reel. Scaler, blade and disgorger all in one, it folds up tidily into a cowhide case with a belt loop on the back. When closed, a tight safety clasp keeps trouble away from young, prying fingers.





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A BRIGHT IDEA developed by an old-time West Coast fisherman—a landing net that opens and closes automatically with a one-hand operation. Of a hard aluminum alloy with stainless steel springs, it weighs 13 oz., measures 20" and can handle a 30" fish. Even a conservative fisherman will appreciate it.

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WOLF SHORTS. The original Hollywood Wolf leers from a Hollywood & Vine lamp post. Red, yellow, and black print on white Sanforized Broadcloth.

FLAMING SHORTS. Flaming red matches on white Sanforized Broadcloth. Surprise that male! Both "Wolf" and "Flaming" are elastic band, boxer type shorts. Guaranteed sizes 28 to 42. $2.50 a pair postpaid. *An exclusive from—*

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Delicious on your table
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CHOICEST HAMS
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Country ham and red gravy . . . Southern cooking at its best! Now you can enjoy the real country goodness of hickory-smoked Tennessee hams. Flavored with the aromatic smoke of hickory embers and slowly aged to give you the taste thrill of a lifetime. You won't forget the mouth-watering treat of a LITTLE COUNTRY SMOKEHOUSE HAM. Only 95c per pound. SEND YOUR ORDER TODAY!

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Please Send C.O.D. . . . . hams, approximately . . . . pounds each @ 95c per pound. (Hams weight 16-25 pounds.)
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NOTE Hams weigh 16-25 lbs. Please specify weight desired. We attempt to fill your order closely as possible.

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What's wrong with your dancing?

1. Poor posture?
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You'll be amazed and thrilled how quickly these common dancing errors can be corrected. With "The New Arthur Murray Way" you learn the right way...right away.

MAKES LEARNING TO DANCE EASIER...FASTER

Even if you never danced before...you can go dancing after one lesson

Think back to the last dancing party you went to... Who had the best time? The good dancers, of course. Were you one? Or, did timidity and lack of skill keep you on the sidelines? Arthur Murray has helped thousands conquer shyness and develop self-confidence through dance lessons. And, he can help you, too. Here's how—

Arthur Murray has discovered a new shortcut to dancing skill, "The First Step To Popularity," that makes learning to dance faster than ever. Once you master this key step the secret of the Rumba, Fox Trot, Waltz, Samba, all dances, is yours. And, this basic step is so simple to learn that you will dance with carefree confidence after one lesson. Yes, this is true even if you never danced before.

Come in for a free dance analysis

So don't miss out on the good times that should be yours. Visit an Arthur Murray Studio now. Meet the instructors. Let one of them give you a free 15-minute dance analysis. Bring your husband, wife or friend and have this check-up together. You'll find lessons cost less at Arthur Murray's because you learn so quickly. Come in and see.

Just to give you an idea of how easy it is to become an expert dancer Arthur Murray is offering, for a limited time only, his entertaining and instructive dance book, "Murray-Go-Round." Send today — use coupon below.

Learning to dance is fun when you put yourself in the hands of an Arthur Murray Expert

"'The New Arthur Murray Way' is so basic yet so easy to learn, that everyone grasps it the first time you show them," says Lisa Derney. "It's fun to teach dancing this new way and thrilling to see people dance after one lesson."

"Many think the Rumba's only for experts. The steps and rhythm seem so tricky," says Betty Jordan. "But you can learn the secret to this gay dance in just 5 minutes at Arthur Murray's."

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Arthur Murray

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Visit the one nearest you for a FREE dance analysis

ONLY 25¢

ARTHUR MURRAY STUDIOS, Dept. 4C
(Consult telephone directory for address of nearest studio, or write Arthur Murray Studios, 11 East 43rd Street, New York 17).
Please send me your magazine, "Murray-Go-Round," 44 pages of pictures, dance news, instructions. I enclose 25c.

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Esquire—March

Backstage with Esquire

John Gunther

JOHN GUNTHER has become so renowned for his "Inside" books covering Europe, Asia, Latin America and the U.S.A., that people are likely to forget he has also published several widely read novels including *The Bright Nemesis* and *The Golden Fleece*. And while *I Dub You Sir Knight* (page 34) is not his first piece of magazine fiction, we believe you will agree it is one of his best. Back in 1935, while covering political events for the Chicago *Daily News*, Mr. Gunther obligingly ate his way across Europe for Esquire's readers with such provocative results as *Food Along the Danube* and *Roast Beef of Old New England*. He has since become something of an institution; *Inside Europe* which has appeared in seven different editions, translated into nineteen languages and published in Braille has exerted direct influence in several countries and been suppressed in several more. The most recent and biggest of all his projects so far is *Inside USA*, a 500,000-word volume which he based upon visits in all of the 48 states, interviews with presidents, presidential candidates, and cabinet members, most of the more prominent governors and mayors, as well as other public figures all the way from Henry Ford to Harry Bridges. Between excursions Mr. Gunther lives in a small midtown apartment in New York City and likes it.

GEORGE ZUCKERMAN says: "*The Case of Lela Cade* was written in my West Los Angeles home where I practice the hazardous art of free-lancing with magazine editors, movie producers and the weeds in my garden. I'm thirty-two, married, an expectant father, a native of Brooklyn. Studied journalism at the University of South Carolina, was sports editor of the Atlantic City *Daily World* and spent several years as a G.I., being in command of the English language at various PRO's." His short stories have appeared in *Cosmopolitan* and *Collier's*, and he has written screen scenarios for sundry independent producers, as well as for Paramount, Eagle-Lion and Republic.

Ray Atkeson

RAY ATKESON spent his boyhood on a large farm. Schooling and routine jobs in Kansas City, Missouri, were followed by work in the harvest fields and ranches of Middle West and Rocky Mountain states. His nomadic life gradually led him westward to Portland, Oregon, which has been his home ever since. A wish to record the striking beauties of the Northwest made photography first his hobby, then his profession, with the accent on pictorial sports subjects like *Fisherman's Dream* on page 45.

STEVE APRIL says: "The Army—of all people—had me doing odd jobs around a movie studio; everything from handling lights to being a 'green man' (taking care of those plants you see through a window in the background) and it was there I got the idea for *Lights! Camera! Action!* (page 72). Later Uncle Sam sent me to Italy for a few years till the war ended, and for a time I thought I was going to be the only Pfc in the Air Corps. Early this year I fell in love with Haiti and am trying to save a bundle to return there."

Muky

MUKY came to this country a dozen years ago from Budapest, Hungary, where he had chased ambulances and fire trucks as a photo-reporter for one of the daily papers. Two months after embarking he was signed by Warner Brothers and went to Hollywood; he spent the next six years there, glamourizing the stars. "Unfortunately," he muses, "as time passed the stars became older and older and I kept making them younger and younger, and I saw that I was losing the race." Hence he transferred his headquarters to New York to do advertising and illustrative photography for magazines and agencies.

André Durenceau

The artist, ANDRÉ DURENCEAU, whose paintings of gamefish comprise valuable reference material for anglers (see pages 82 and 83) is a French-born American. As an honor student at Beaux Arts and Germain Pillon, he was brought to this country in 1922 to design jewelry. Since then he has achieved distinction in many art forms—from sculpture to murals, motion-picture sets and costumes, and book designs. His murals and decorations are displayed in seagoing ships and in swank hotels, restaurants, airports and private homes throughout the land. Durenceau collectors include Lionel Barrymore and Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney. The most recent of his book illustrations were commissioned by the Literary Guild for a limited edition of the Samuel Butler classic, *The Way of All Flesh*.

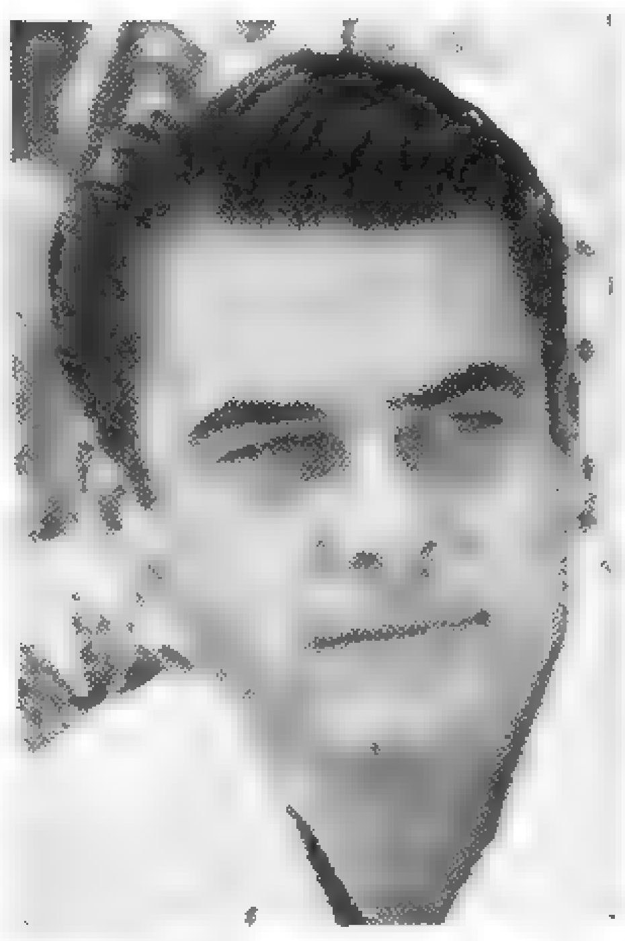
LEN ZINBERG (*The Man Who Wouldn't Say Uncle*, page 49) has been contributing stories to Esquire for more than a decade, and is the author of a novel, *Hold with the Hares*, published by Doubleday last fall.

When HAL BURTON sat down to write *Here Is Whiteface* (page 37) his chief concern was to keep himself out of the story. As a skier, before the war, he originated and initiated the mammoth ski-lift development which he describes. "My own favorite ski trails around Lake Placid were getting so popular I couldn't make a turn in peace," he explains. "I figured that if we could develop a big ski center the crowds would go there and leave me alone with some untracked powder snow." He enlisted in the 87th Mountain Infantry; a cameraman from *Yank* happened by while he was at Camp Hale, Colorado, and one of Burton's jump turns made the front cover of that Army weekly. He believes that picture got him through OCS and then overseas as a ski and mountaineering instructor with units of the British Army. He is now with King Features Syndicate and married to a girl who does not ski. "It's just as well," he reasons. "We'll never have any family arguments about who makes the best Christiania turns."

RICHARD GEHMAN, who inquires: *Where Are the Postwar Novels?* on page 74, is working on his own p.w.n. which he calls *The Great Commotion at Martin's Corners*. Twenty-seven years old, he is a fairly regular reviewer of books for the *Saturday Review of Literature*, conducts a column in another magazine, and has contributed to many publications. He was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, went to work for a newspaper when he was fourteen and was doing radio script writing when the U. S. Army then sent him to Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to edit the official weekly newspaper of the atomic-bomb project.

Bruce Bliven, Jr.

Shortly after BRUCE BLIVEN, JR., was graduated from Harvard, the New York *Post* hired him to write editorials on the paradoxical theory that editorial writers ought not to know anything. "This suited me perfectly," he declares, "but once in awhile I would look out of the window and wonder what it would be like to get out of doors. In 1942 the Army provided me with a 3½ year answer to my question. I was out of doors in South Carolina, Oklahoma, Maryland, Devonshire, Cornwall, Normandy, the Netherlands and Germany. In Cornwall it occurred to me that I didn't really want to write editorials any more than I wanted to be in Cornwall, so I became a free-lance writer."



William Fuller

WILLIAM FULLER is a Floridian, married, with two small boys and a predilection for fishing which he hopes to satisfy after he has built his dream house on a Key between the Gulf of Mexico and Lemon Bay. He says: "I write because finishing a piece is the greatest thrill in the world—even if nobody wants it. My jobs (after two highly unsuccessful college years) include: work as a migratory farmer and as deckhand on freighters and tankers in the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf of Mexico (with intermittent periods on the beach in those wonderful towns, San Francisco and New Orleans). I have been a Hollywood extra, in Westerns mostly; however at six-feet-three I was the tallest Chinese in *Marco Polo*. I have done various publicity stints, including a six-months tour of duty herding four models in red wigs, known as the Macy Redheads, to the better New York night spots. My favorite was a six-foot lass with a dazzling smile who couldn't keep her wig on straight after several drinks. There were also four years in the Army, part of which I spent on Guam, Leyte, and Okinawa."

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the smooth *side of style. Yes! for Spring,*
it's reverse calf, the big city shoe
with a country air—and, when it's a
Florsheim, it has the quality that
makes fine styling look even better,
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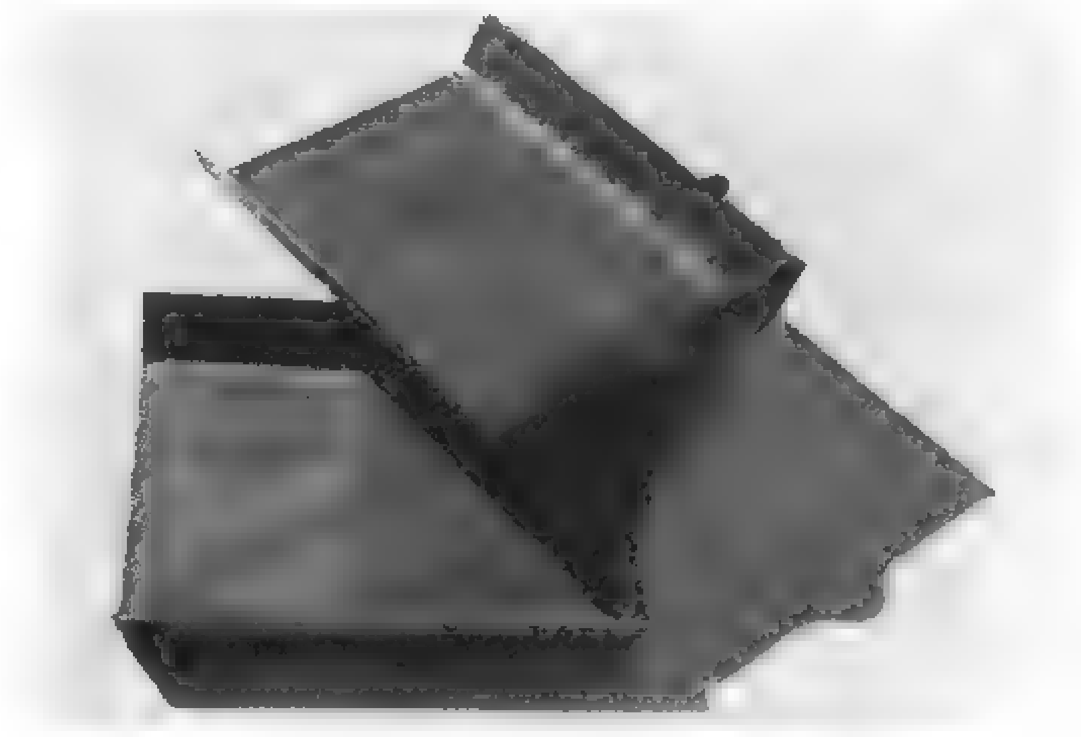
Florsheim Shoes

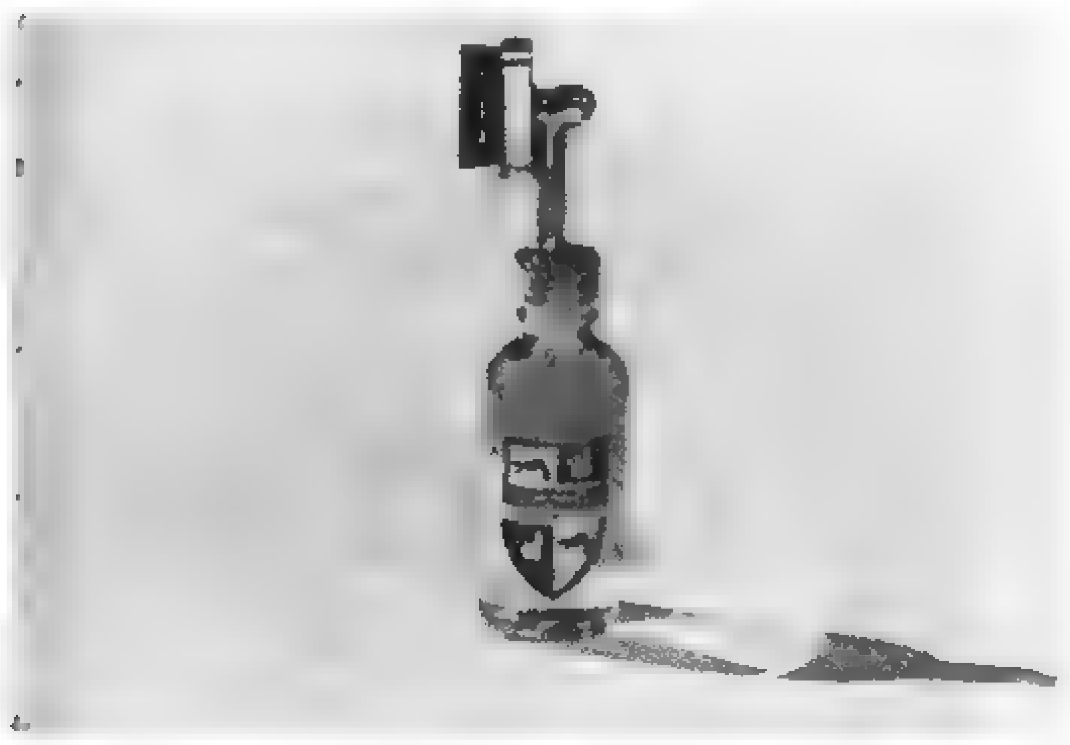
The Florsheim Shoe Company • Chicago • Makers of fine shoes for men and women

FLORSHEIM
The FLORSHEIM Shoe

Talking Shop with Esquire

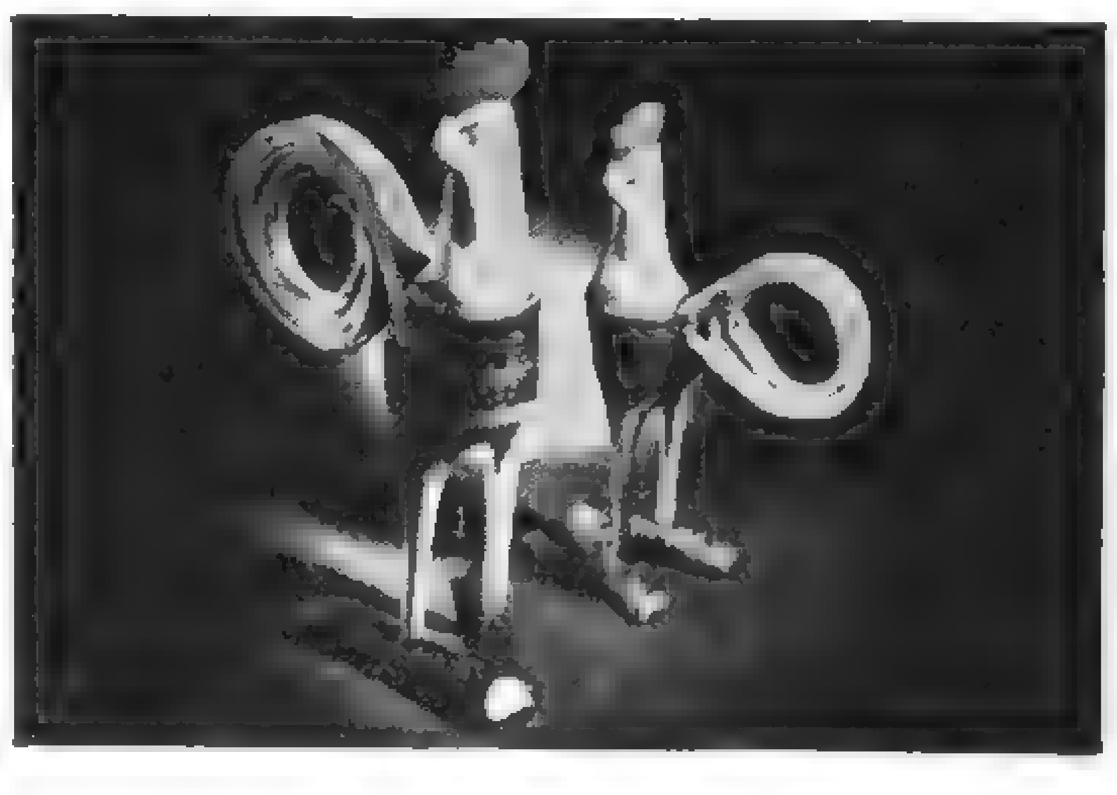
PRIZEWINNER. A moulded plywood letter tray, wonderfully efficient, was a 1948 selection of the American Institute of Decorators. It has two trays and the top tray turns on a swivel. Designed by Florence Knoll in natural birch, this is a handsome addition — and a useful one — either for the den or office.

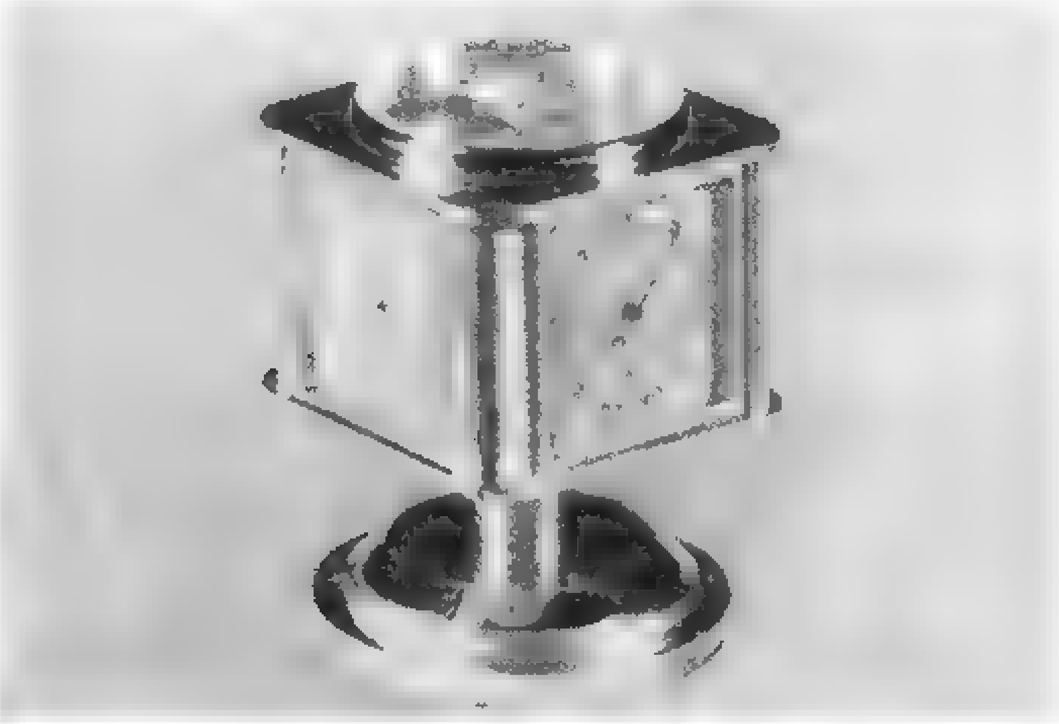




EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT for every good secretary's desk. This is a small bottle with an elongated neck and brush attached. If the boss comes back from lunch with soup on his tie or pie on his vest, you soothe his irate temper with your cool efficiency. Tip the bottle and brush him off with cleaning fluid.

A BIRD IN THE HAND, in this instance, is a wooden rooster. Carved by some farmer in Sweden out of a tree branch shaped just right for the rooster's legs, head and fancy tail. There's a small one about 4" and a larger one about 11". This "cock of the walk" bird is for someone with a touch of whimsy in his soul.





ALL THE ANSWERS are at hand on this remarkable clock only four inches high. One face tells the time with a radium dial; it also tells the date automatically. Other faces are respectively; thermometer, barometer, hygrometer. For an executive who doesn't quite know where he's at, the compass on top will clarify.

Ranger

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The Emerson "Shore Road," like *all* Emerson hats, *does* something for you. It's smartly styled — expertly made — and priced at a thrifty $7.50. Cravenette showerproofed to ward off showers. Other Emerson hats, $6.50 to $20.00.

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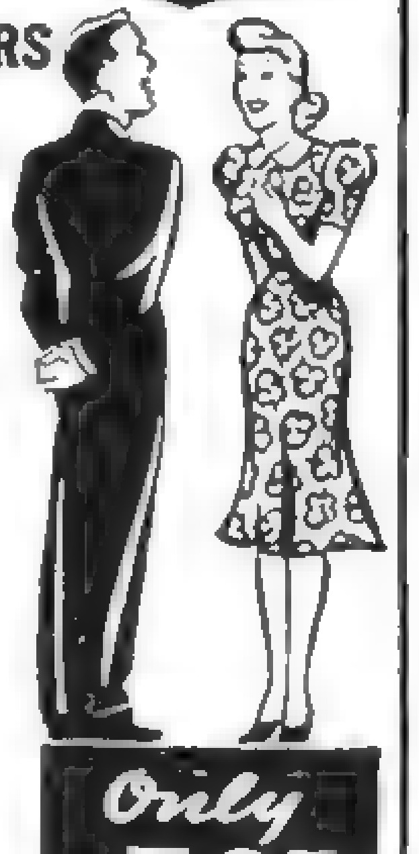
WEAR HITE-BUILDERS IN YOUR OWN SHOES



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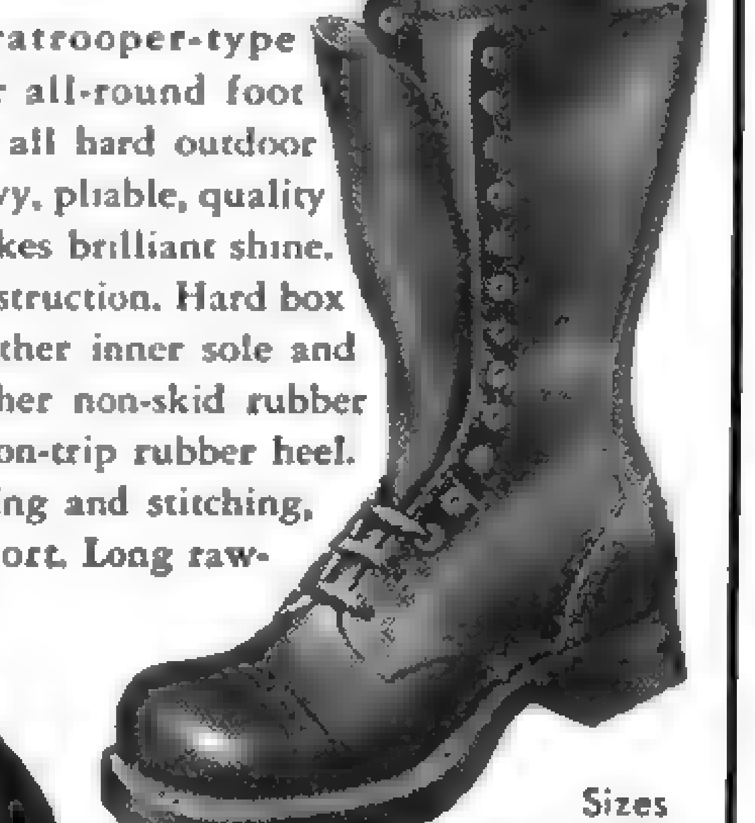

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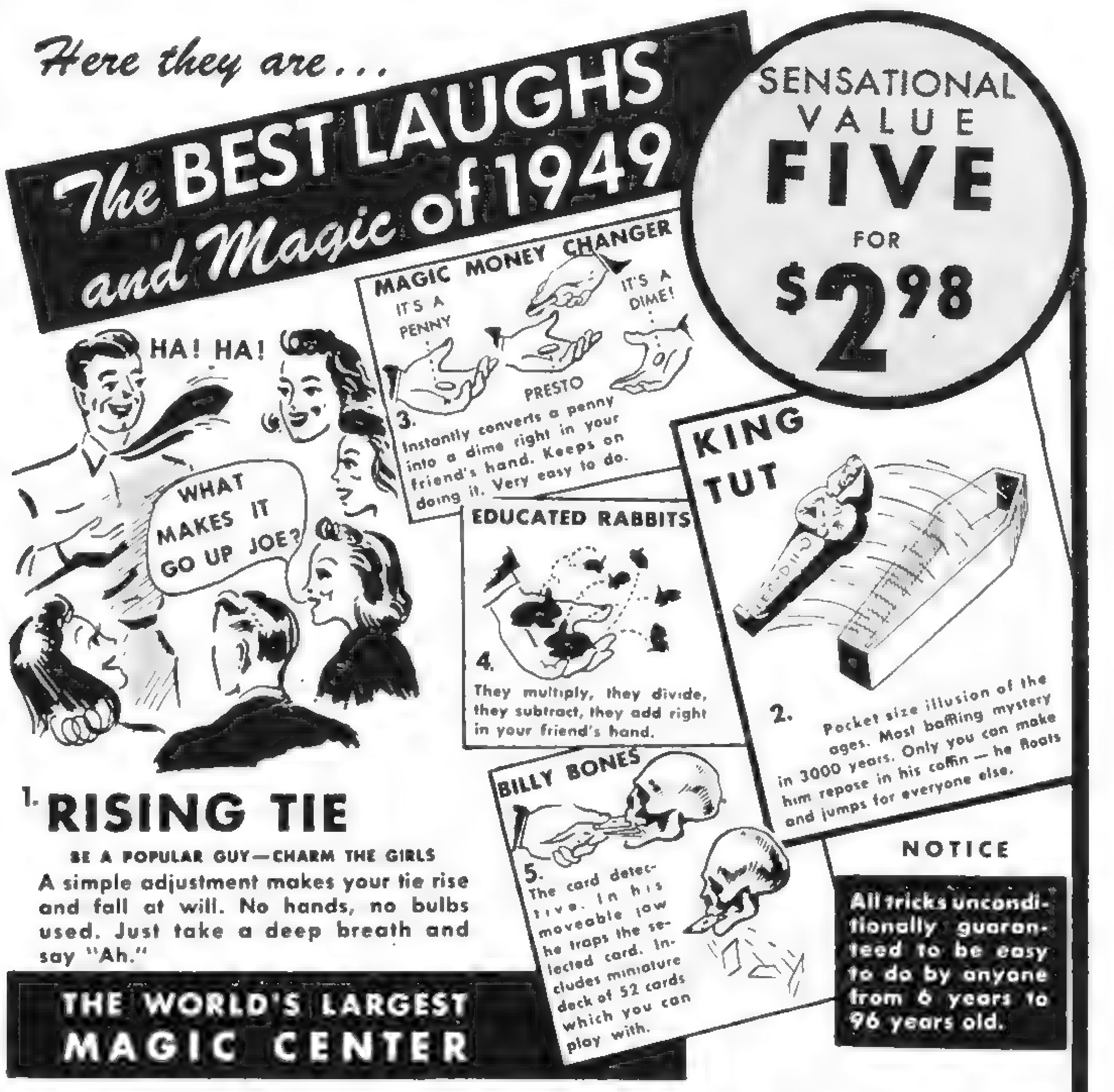

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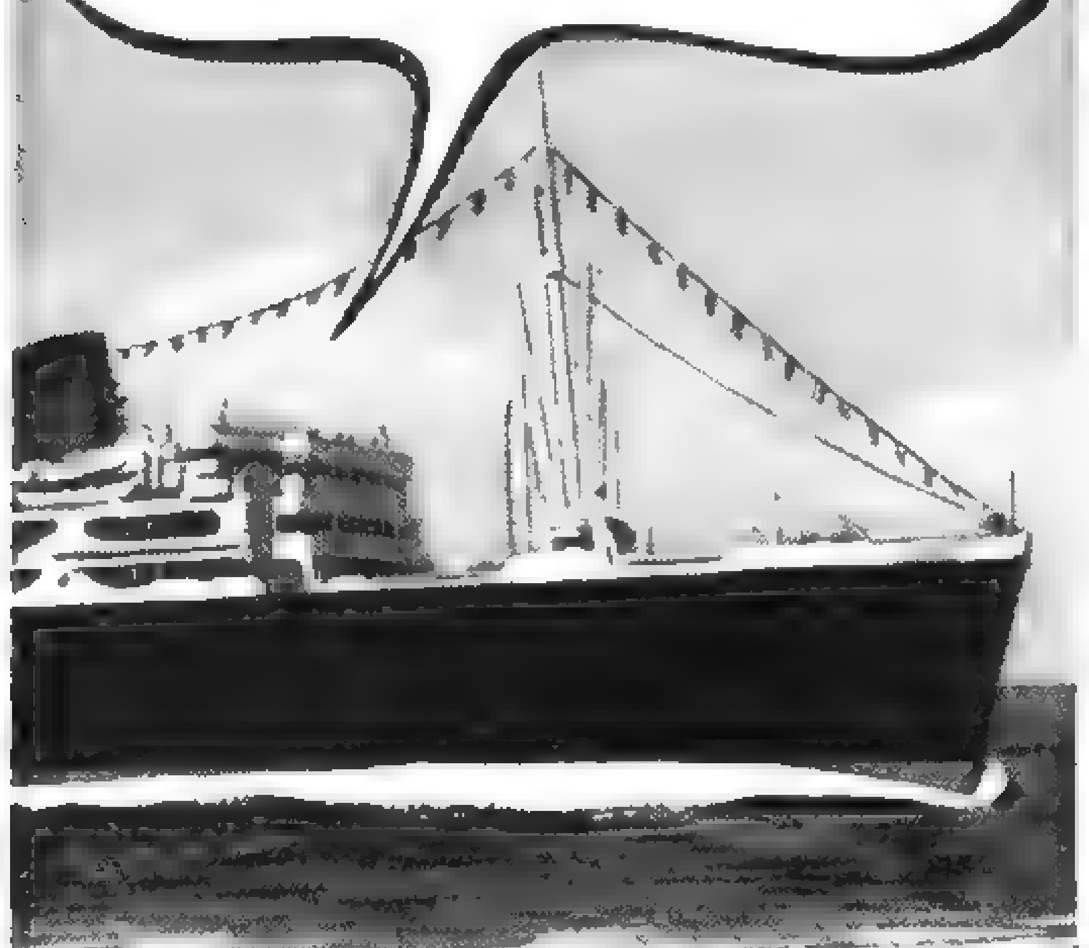

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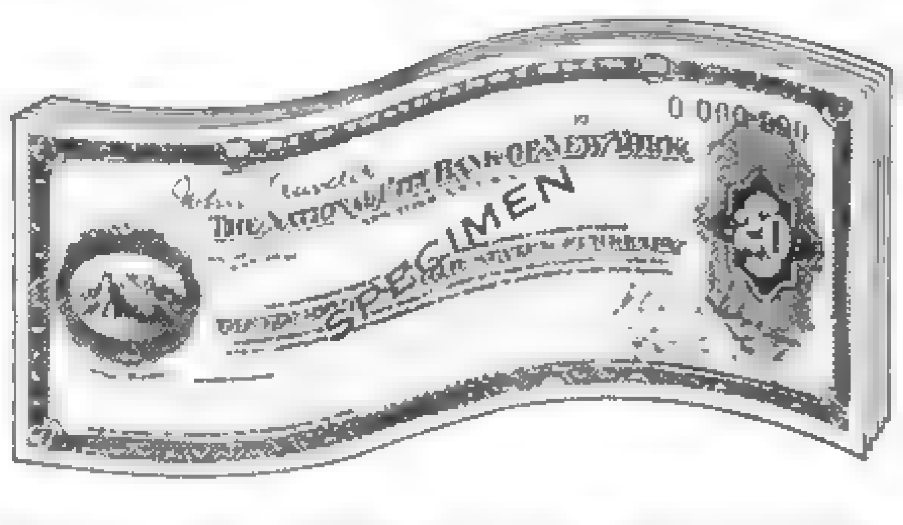

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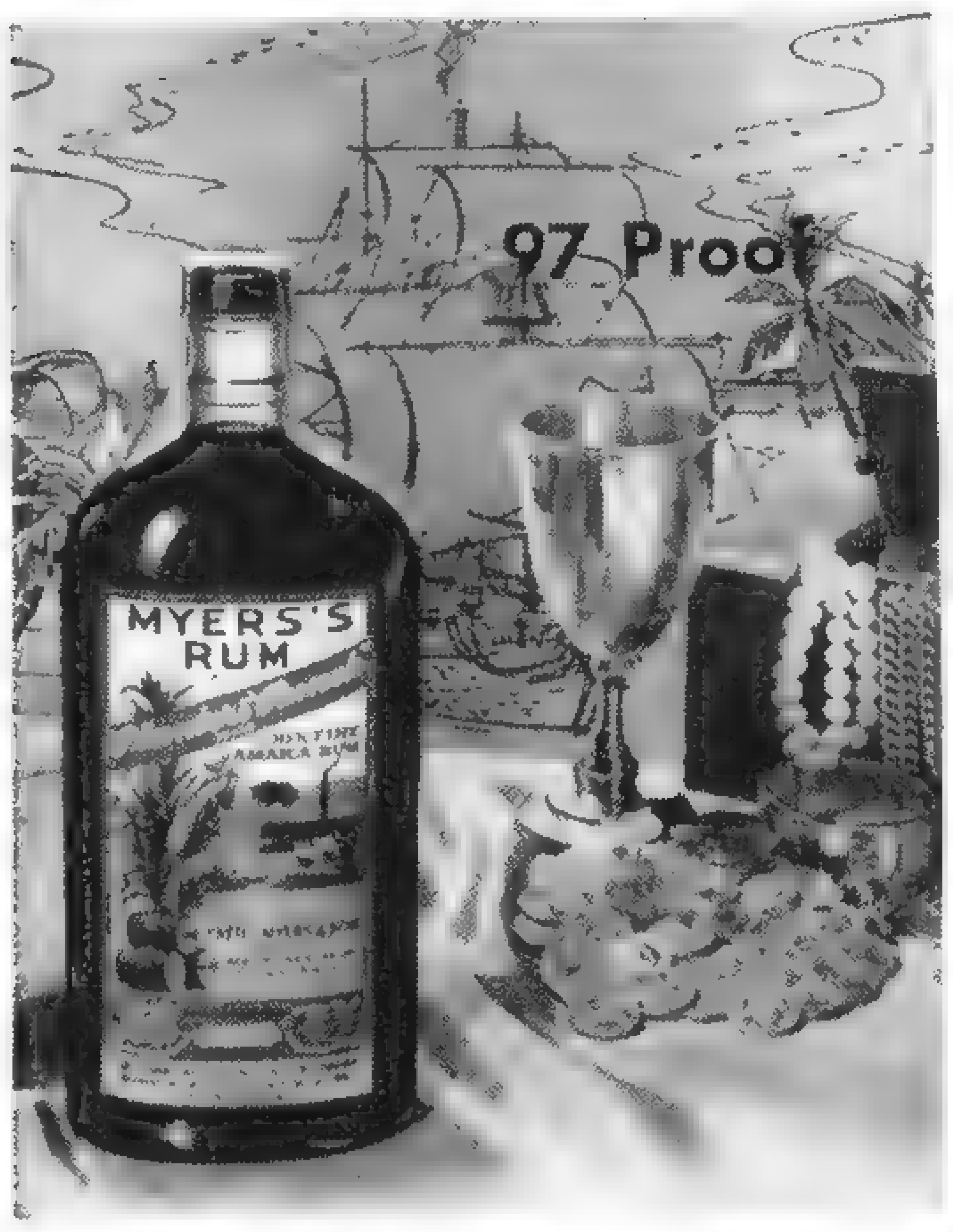

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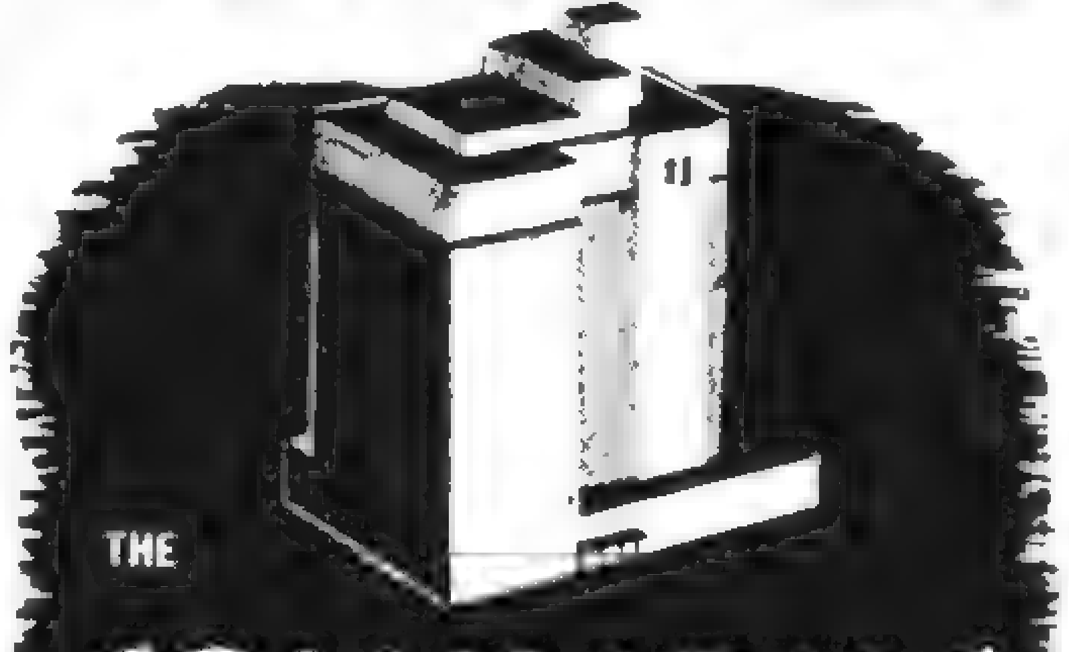

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Going Places

Painting the Town

TO REMARK that a great many people look upon Chambord (on Third Avenue between 49th and 50th Street) as a "frightening" restaurant is merely to state a simple, unfortunate truth. Somehow, people take a certain wicked delight in referring to this or that eating establishment as so expensive that it's "frightening". Chambord has had the misfortune to be one of these places. Here and now, however, we're going to attempt to impale this well-intentioned slander on the sharp point of cold, hard fact. For although people undoubtedly intend it as such, it is scarcely a compliment to speak of Chambord in such awed tones that individuals of none-too-affluent means become terrified of patronizing it. But one is forever hearing it observed that while Chambord is a truly great restaurant—a really terrific restaurant, with superb wines and ineffable sauces, and so forth and so on—it is also frighteningly expensive. Well, it isn't, it isn't, it isn't. Which is not to imply either that it's a Gallic Automat. But as restaurants go these inflated days, Chambord is far from prohibitive.

SINCE ALL such remarks are unconvincing unless fortified with facts, however, we want to list the cost and contents of a sample dinner for two. It might consist of Baked Oysters Chambord (at $2.50); Poulet de Choux Sauté au Vin de Chambertin—or a delicious sauté chicken in wine ($7.00); a crisp mixed green salad with the proper garlic touch ($1.20); Camembert cheese ($1.00); and Demitasse (.70). Thus, for only $12.40, two people can enjoy a dinner at one of the world's most celebrated restaurants. For an additional $5, they can have a bottle of such irreproachable wine as Haut Medoc, 1937.

WE FEEL quite strongly that anyone with a reverence toward fine food is making a serious mistake in passing up Chambord. It has several other things besides its dishes to recommend it. For one thing, it isn't overpoweringly chi-chi, but, on the whole, mellowed and more masculine than feminine. (It's on Third Avenue, after all; Third Avenue, the street of fine, roistering Irish saloons and of Don Birnam's pilgrimage with that damned typewriter of his; Third Avenue, the street lying in the long shadows of the El.) For another thing, the service is gracious and conducive to leisurely repast. (We will not slander the place by suggesting that you can be served in five minutes flat, because you can't. Roger Chauveron, the proprietor, has far too much concern for his customers' digestion to indulge in any such nonsense.) We must, though, register one wee complaint. Chambord persists in printing its menus in French. For Georges Carpentier, Jean Sablon, Mistinguette, Charles Trenet, Maurice Chevalier, Jean Gabin, Mademoiselle from Armentières, and Roger Chauveron, this may be just fine and dandy. But for us, with our Fraser and Squair grounding, it is sheer befuddlement. A small point, but we respectfully call it to M. Chauveron's attention.

OUR CONCERN with straightening you out on Chambord doesn't leave us much space to dwell upon the merits of several other places we think you should investigate.

BUT OUT IN Los Angeles — on the edge of Beverly Hills (at 643 North La Cienega) is a marvelous little place called the Bantam Cock. We went there a week ago and had some of the best fried chicken we've ever tasted. We had no gripes about the Caesar Salad either. In the gilded confines of Hollywood, where one sometimes has to cash in his insurance policy to get out of a restaurant without doing pots-and-pans duty, the Bantam Cock is a rarity—a place serving extraordinarily good food at prices slightly lower than the National debt. We recommend it very, very highly indeed . . . Just by way of comment, the Copacabana (on East 60th Street) is still putting on the best cabaret show in Manhattan. Lena Horne, who is just about the most exciting girl on display in any nightclub in the country, finished at the Copacabana early in November but is due to return there next Fall. Meanwhile, Mitzi Green, the gifted impersonator, will take over this February . . . Jazz fans will continue to patronize Nick's and Condon's, of course, but we would like to suggest that they make it a point to visit Jimmy Ryan's (on West 52nd). Chippie Hill, a buxom lady of indeterminate age, chants the blues nightly. In her way, she is just as exciting as Lena Horne. That's known as high praise around these parts.

with Esquire

Getting Away From It All

COMES MARCH and the winter vacation rush is pretty well over at most resorts. Which means you probably will be able to book March accommodations without completing your plans far in advance, as you have to if you want to go to any popular winter resort at the height of the season. That's true both of snow and sun centers, though cruise bookings usually are still fairly tight throughout the month.

"YOURS FOR THE BASKING," in this month's ESQUIRE, tells about Arizona's winter sun magic. Follows now some detailed data on hotels and ranches in Arizona where you can soak up the sunshine without, in turn, being soaked. Down around the Tucson area—which, incidentally, is one of the most popular resort regions in the entire Southwest—El Conquistador offers luxurious hotel rooms or private cottages in a self-contained resort complete with swimming pool, tennis courts and stables — naturally. It's a place to come to for the informal type of winter vacation—where you can climb into blue jeans and really relax all over.

ALSO IN the Tucson area is Thunderhead Ranch, where they'll reserve a golden palomino horse for you—all yours for the length of your stay. You can feed and water him, give him sugar, and play cowboy to your heart's content. Another excellent bet for men who like real ranch life is the Rancho Linda Vista, lying in the foothills of the Santa Catalina Mountains, 4200 feet high, about 33 miles north of Tucson. The Linda Vista is a real working ranch, with several thousand head of cattle and two hundred horses. Guests can take part in the round-ups, roping and branding—if they don't get too badly in the way of the working cowboys. Average March temperature in the Tucson area, by the way, runs about 72 degrees.

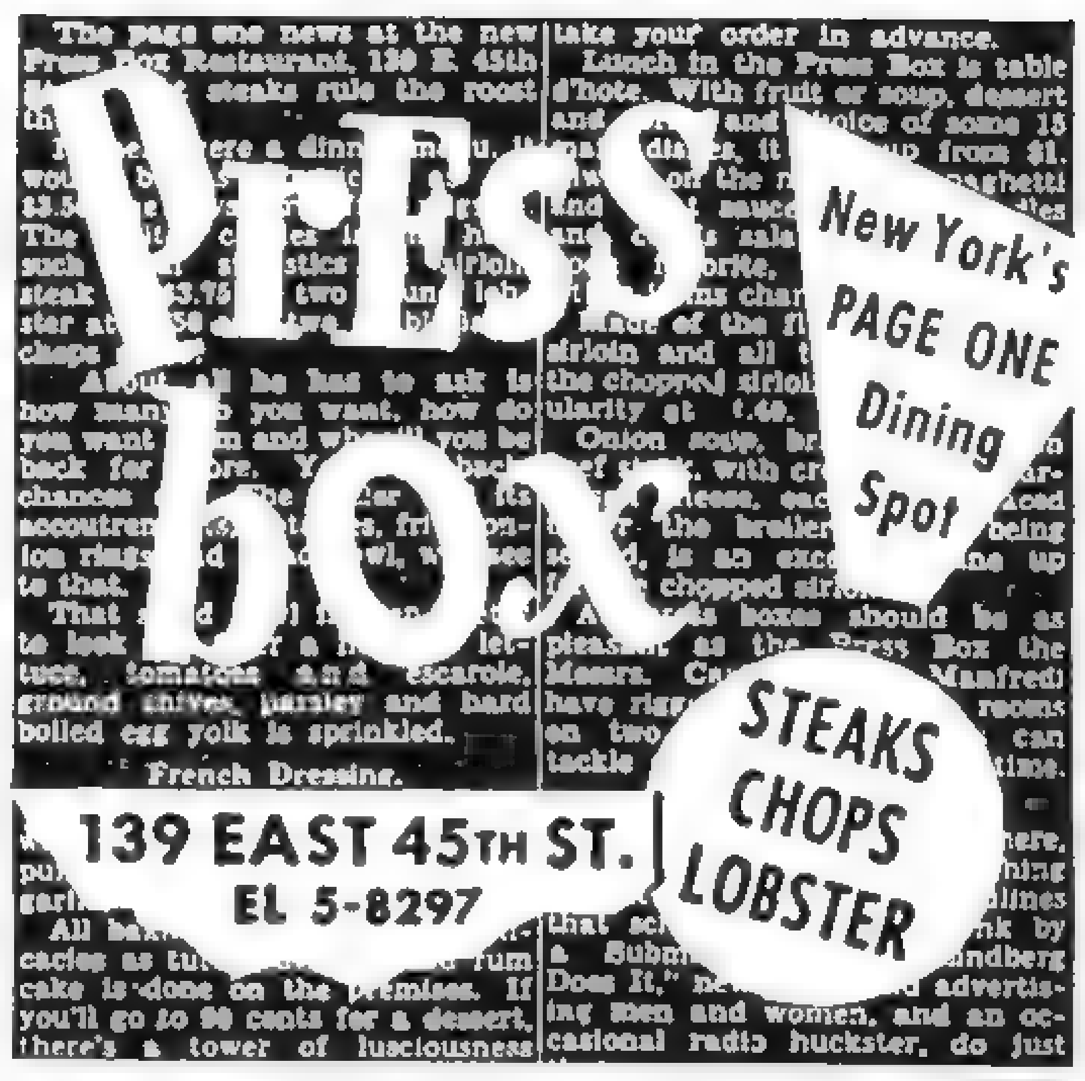
THE PAINT PONY LODGE, at Show Low, Arizona, caters particularly to the outdoorsman. Hunting and trout fishing in the surrounding White Mountain playground area are main attractions for the visiting sportsman, and pack trips to the best mountain fish and game areas are made up at the Lodge. It's a perfect setup for the man who likes to combine western riding with his hunting and fishing.

TYPICAL OF the topnotch desert resorts centered around Camelback Mountain a few miles out of Phoenix is Jokake Inn. Here you'll find the warm, dry winter days and cool crisp nights that have made Arizona's Valley of the Sun a winter vacation favorite. Jokake has two swimming pools (one for the kids), tennis courts, putting greens, badminton and shuffleboard, with good golf nearby. And riding in the surrounding desert will make you feel like the hero or villain of a horse opera—depending on whether your mood is heroic or villainous at the moment. All sorts of special horsy events — such as sunrise breakfasts on the trail, moonlight rides and chuck wagon picnics—are arranged at the stables.

IF YOU want to soak up desert sunshine in the center of town, just climb up to the roof garden sun decks of the Hotel Westward Ho, a few blocks from downtown Phoenix. This is the spot for the incurable townsman — the guy who feels lost out of sight of a sidewalk. Here he can combine town life with fresh air and ultra-violet rays and junkets into the surrounding spaces.

FOR A LOT more dope on vacationing in the sun country, write Trans World Airlines or ask your travel agent for TWA's free booklet, "The Great Southwest." Gives you a lot of detailed data on resorts, rates, climate, sightseeing and transportation. BY THE TIME you read this, the Bermuda picture will be brightened considerably by the return of the "Queen Bermuda" to the New York-Bermuda service. The "Queen" has been renovated from stem to stern. After a year and a half in drydock she's practically a new ship. So much so that Furness, Bermuda Line planned "maiden voyage" ceremonies for the initial run February 12.

For information about any hotels, restaurants or night clubs, write "Esquire About Town," 366 Madison Avenue, New York 17, N.Y.



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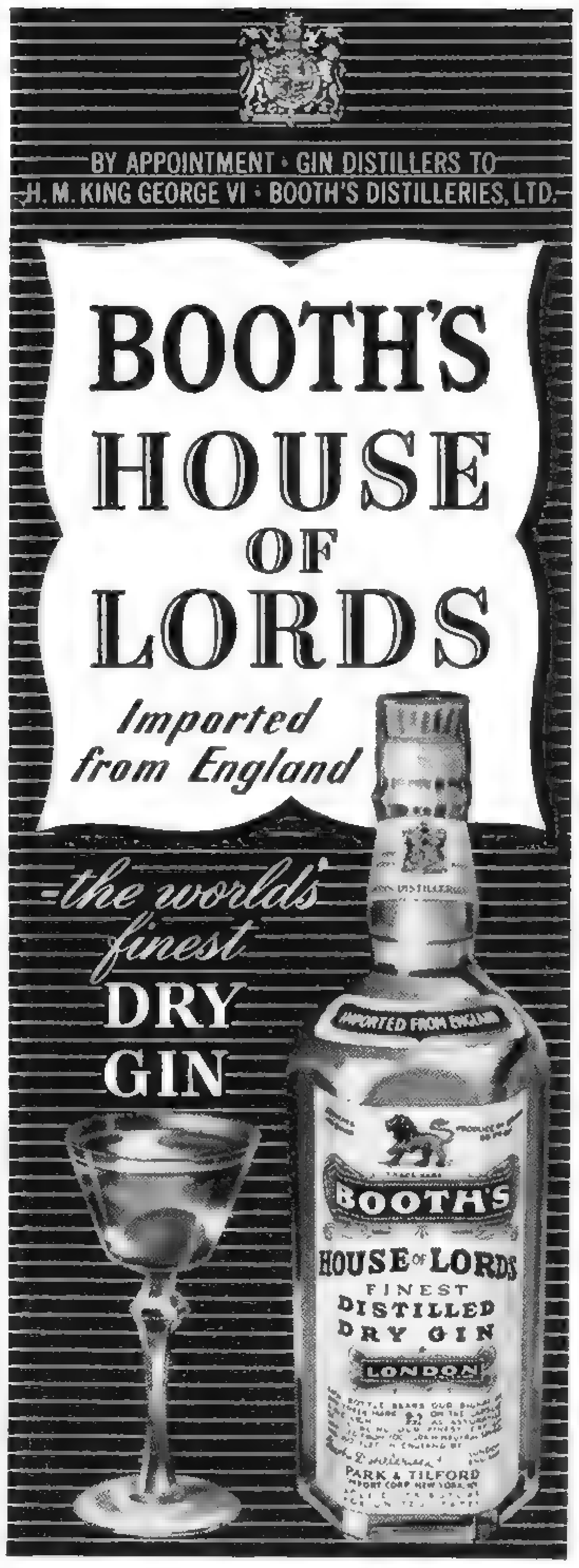

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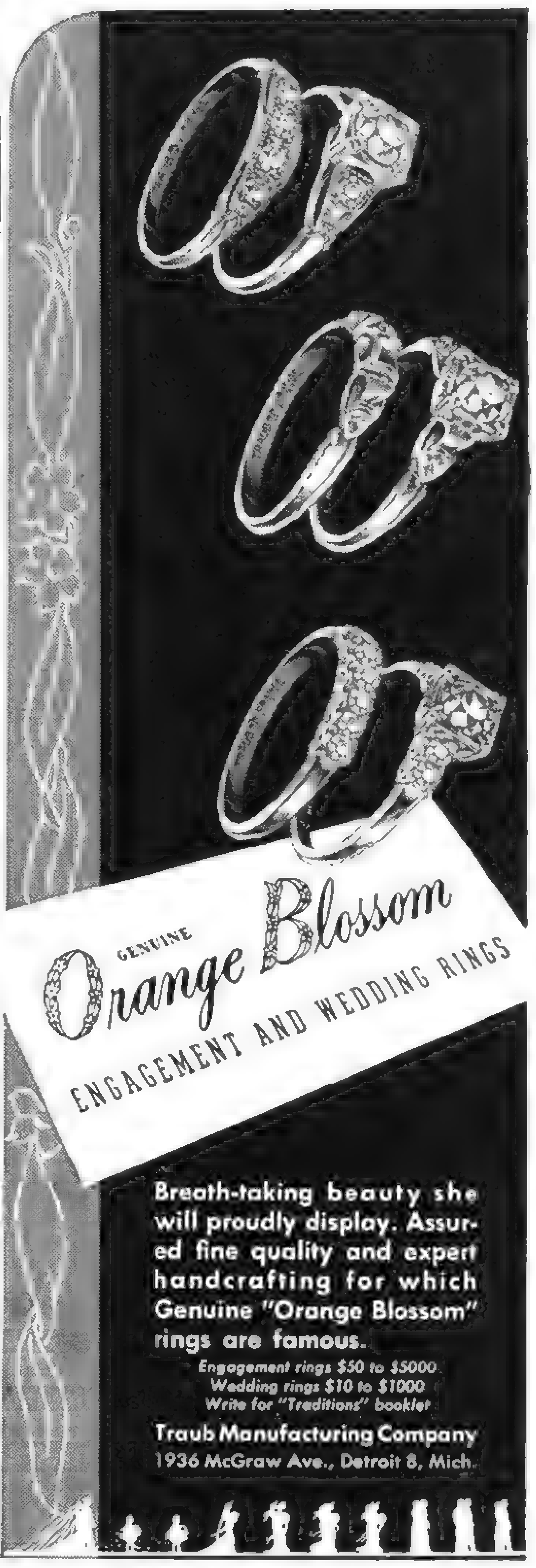

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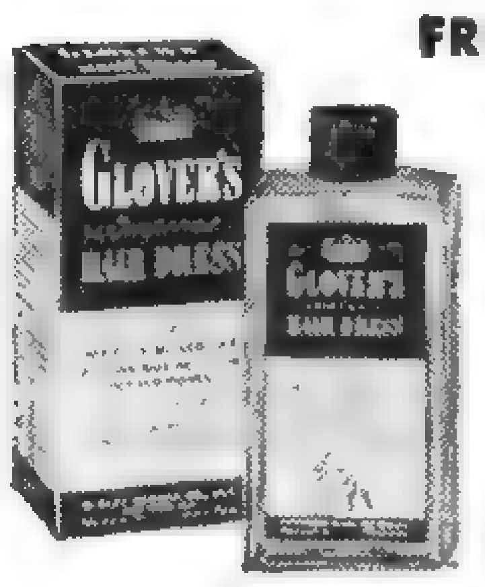

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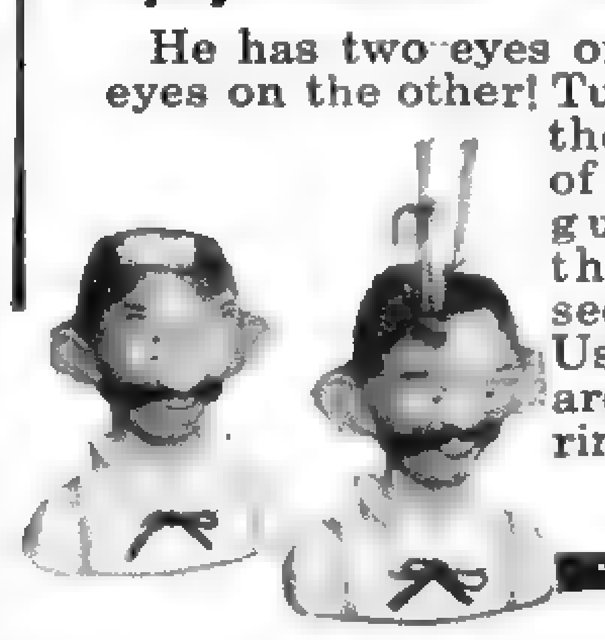

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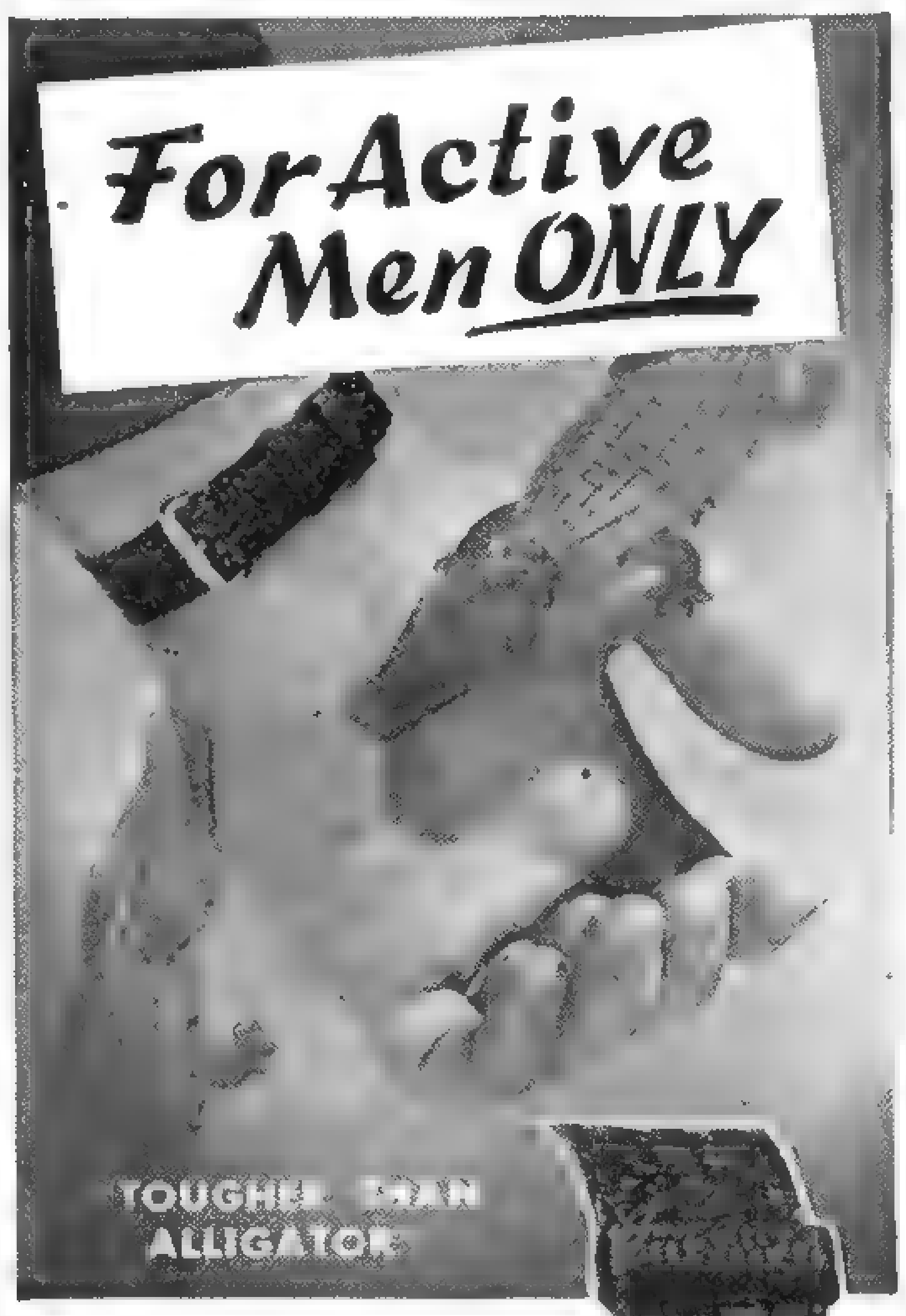

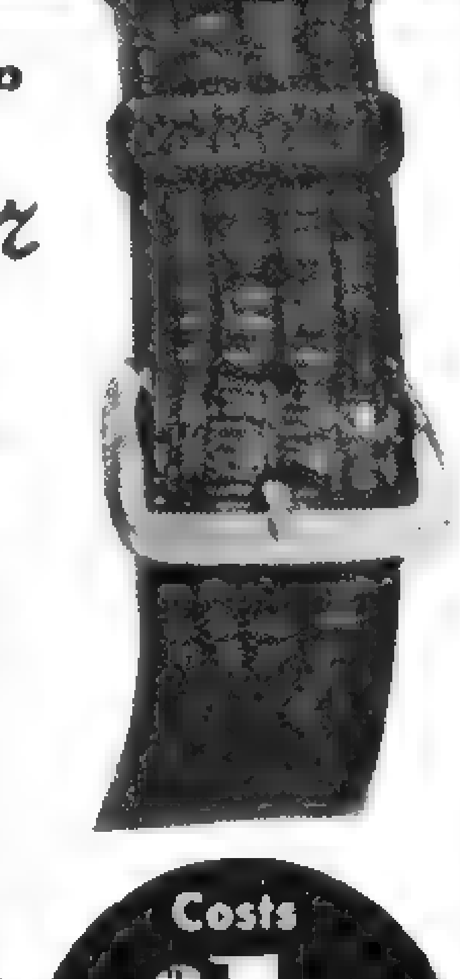

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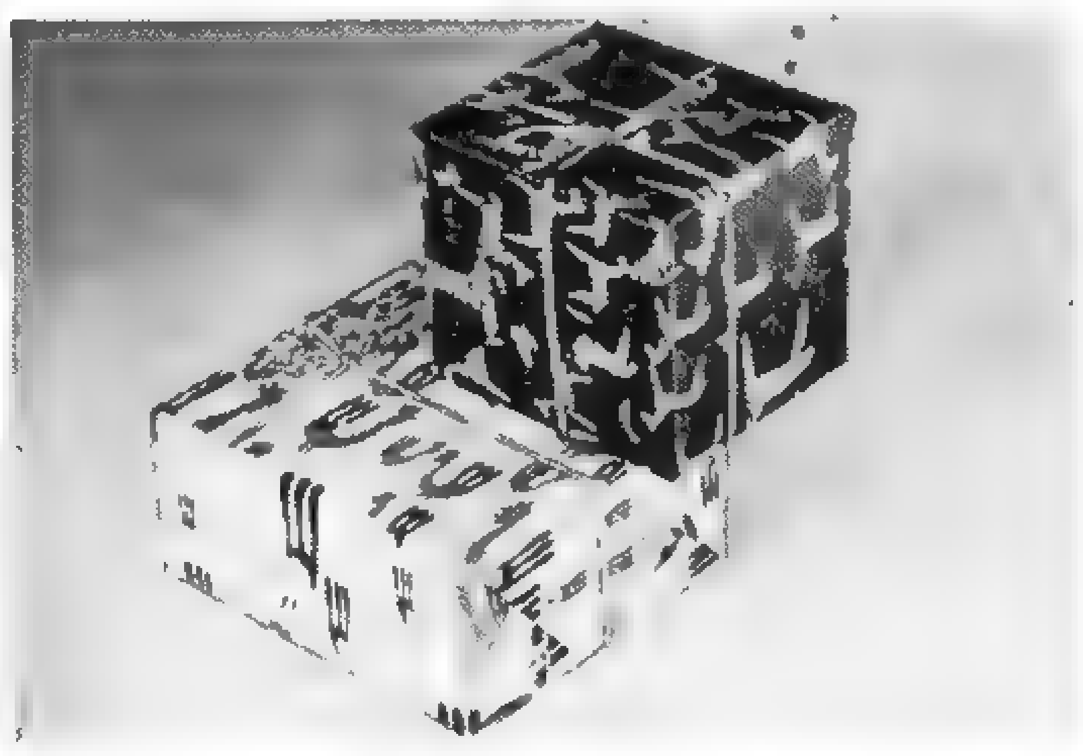

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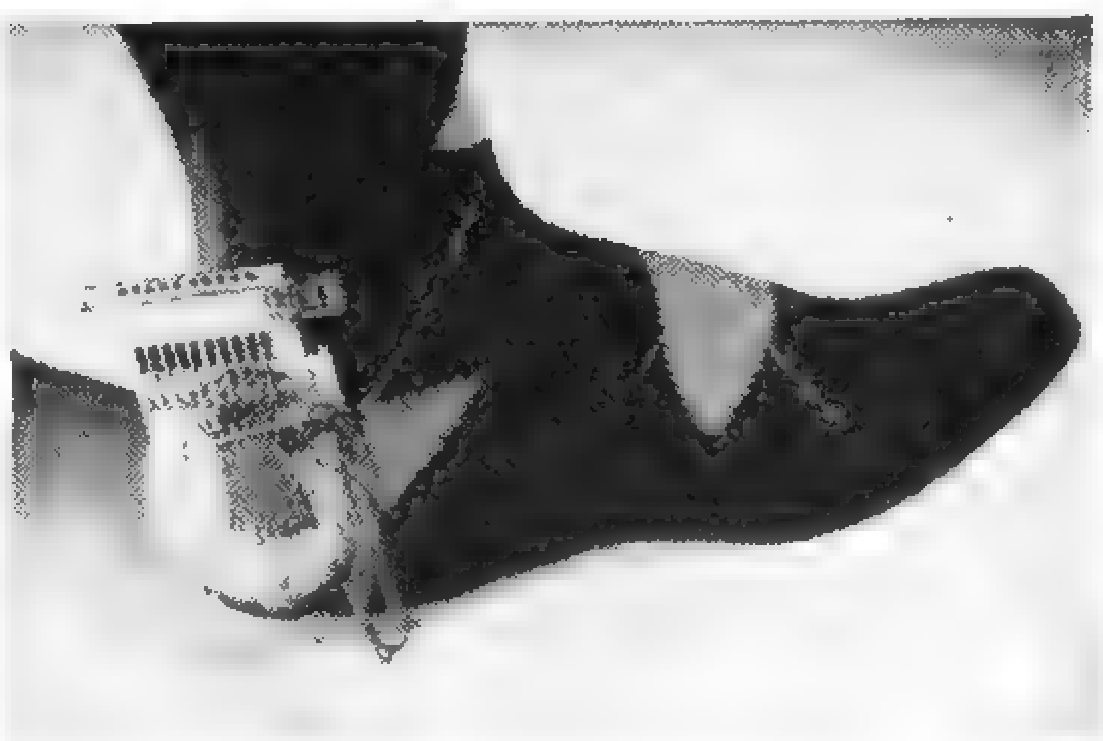

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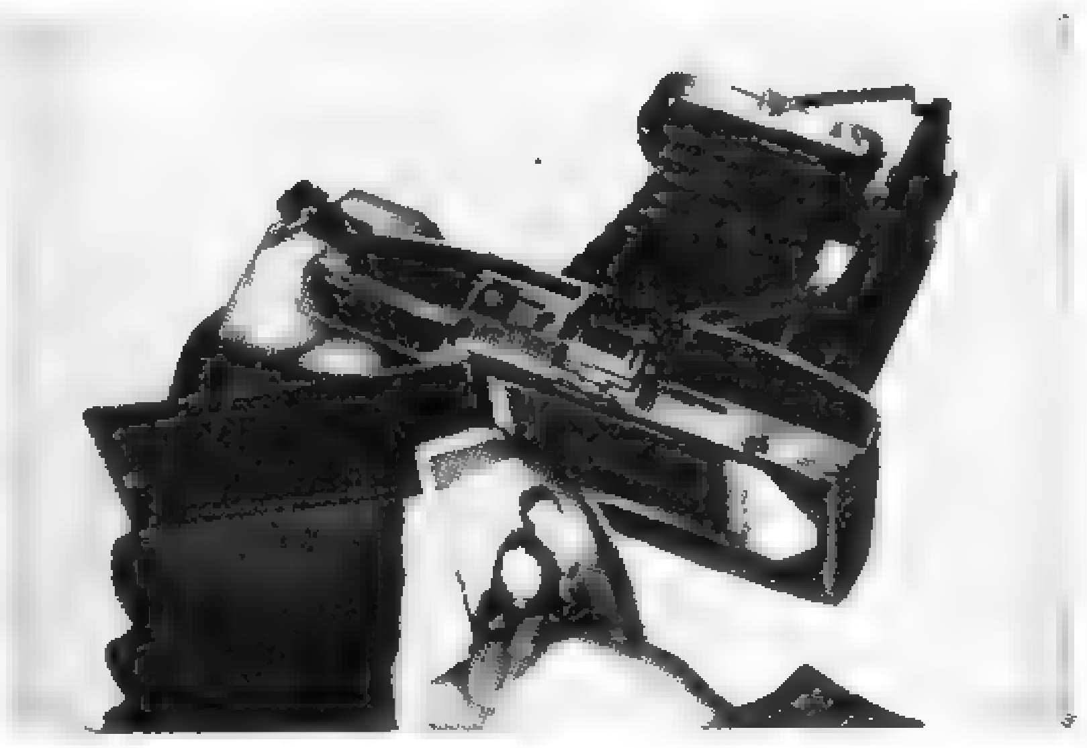

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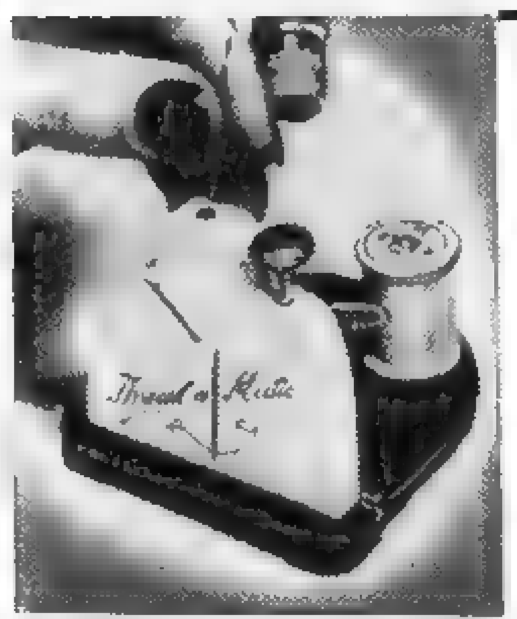

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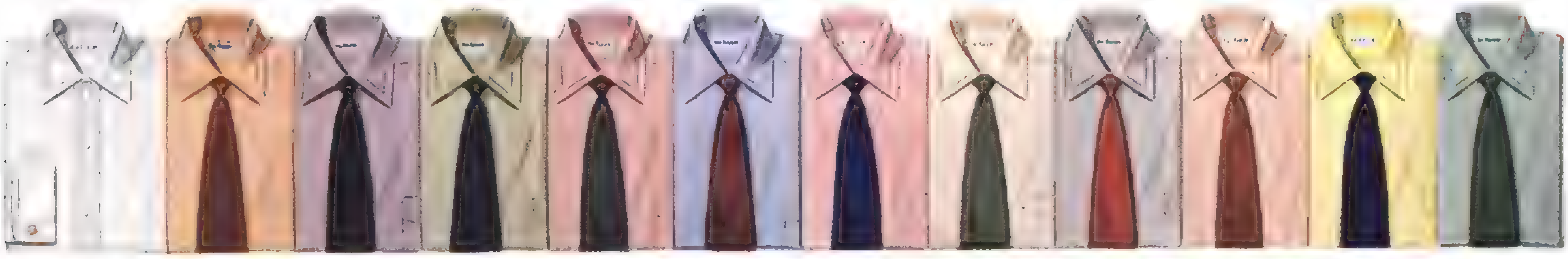

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Esquire
THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

The Tawdry Mantle of Don Juan

Don't be envious of Casanova and his modern counterparts. Latest scientific research shows them to be victims of their own anxiety, fears and insecurity

An Article by
JAMES POLING

Not long ago, on a Fifth Avenue bus, I overheard a conversation. A middle-aged man was reading a tabloid newspaper that had devoted a page of pictures and several columns of newsprint to a rapturous story of a notorious playboy's marriage to a glamour girl.

"That's his fourth wife and he isn't even as old as I am," he said to the young man who was his companion. "He really must have what it takes with the women."

The younger man shook his head and said, "Whatta man!"

"I wonder," the older man continued. "Mind you, not that Jean isn't a grand wife—but I sometimes wonder if maybe I haven't missed a lot of fun."

"I know what you mean." His companion nodded sagely. "Take a man like that—four wives and lord knows how many babes on the side. He really has himself some fun!"

I couldn't help smiling. The two men were unaware of the fact that the man they were discussing—and most men like him—completely lacks "what it takes" with the women; rarely, if ever, do such people have "fun." All too often the press, radio, and movies represent the man who is openly promiscuous as a romantic character; to become deified as a great lover in modern journalism, all a man seems to need is enough money to buy and divorce a steady stream of wives. But the conveniently overlooked fact is that a promiscuous man is likely to be a particularly effete lover.

Countless men and women, however, fall for the build-up and begin to wonder, secretly, if their own monogamous sex life is as satisfactory as it should be. And a great many young people absorb completely false ideas from these "romantic" models.

The evolution of such a model follows a fairly set pattern: An irresponsible young man inherits a fortune and runs away with his first chorus girl at the age of seventeen. After their marriage is annulled, he marries a debutante who spends three unhappy years keeping tabs on him through the reports of night-spot gossip columnists. When she goes to Reno, the playboy gets involved with a South American night-club singer who is so successfully exotic that the chief accountant of Cartier's lists the playboy among the firm's tangible assets. When he is thirty—two divorces and an uncounted number of bought-and-paid-for affairs later—he marries a glamour girl whose reputation for virtue is not unassailable. The press has a field day with the "romance," and the photographs that explore the past love lives of the "happy couple" are so crowded with strange faces that they look like convention scenes. The bride's trousseau is itemized, wisp by monogrammed wisp, and the whole world reads about the groom's gift to his bride—a $37,000 emerald-encrusted sleeping-pill container.

Or, for playboy, read actor. He may be such a poor actor that he couldn't register pain while suffering a violent attack of gastroenteritis; but if he has slept—with full benefit of publicity though debatable benefit of clergy—with enough stars, starlets, and waitresses, he automatically becomes a romantic figure with a huge box-office draw.

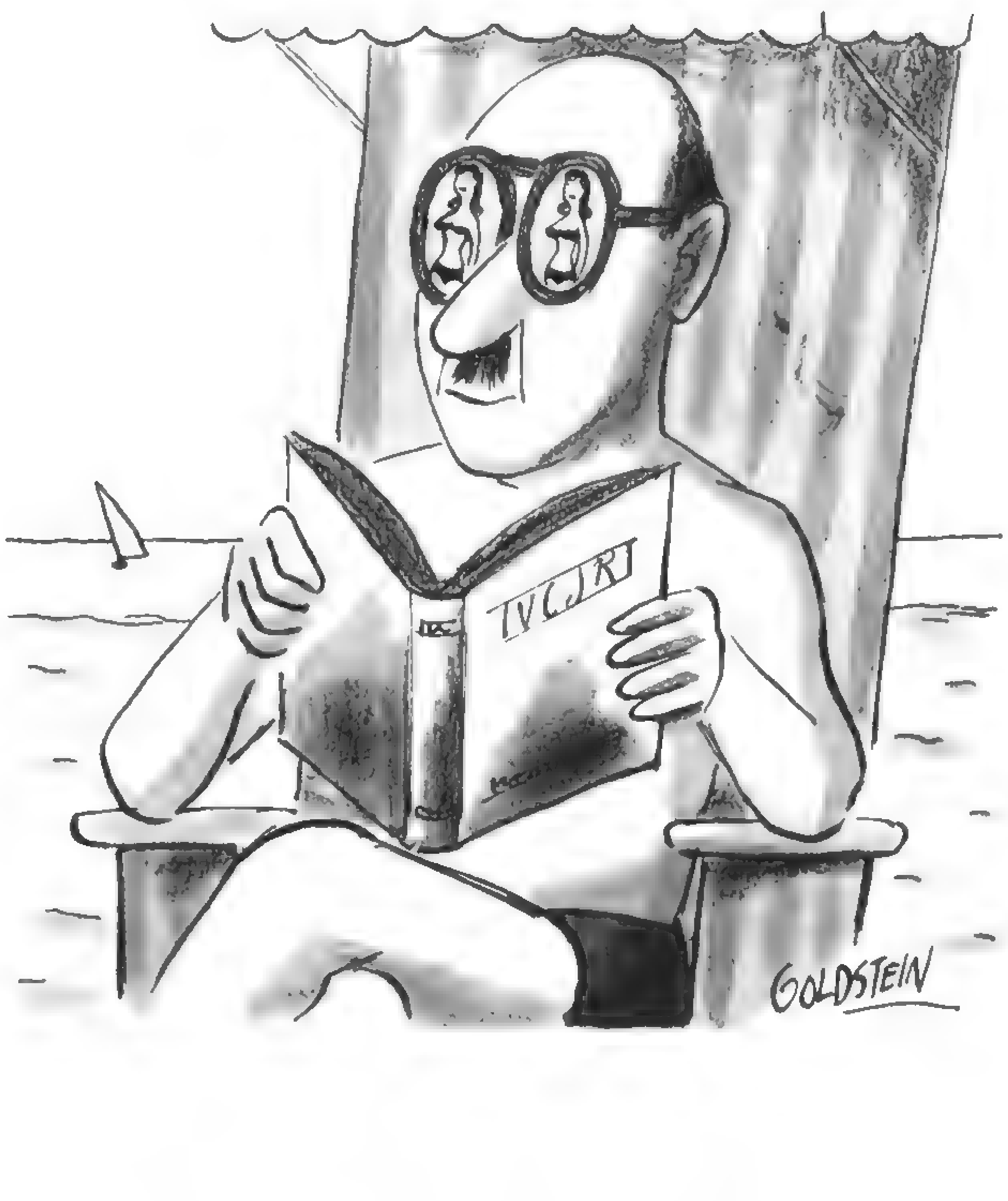
Thus, the myth of the libertine—or wolf, as he is now colloquially called—is popularly enhanced and a false notion takes root: the idea that a man's maleness can be judged in relation to the number of women he has seduced. Even the nonpublicized wolf, who can be found on the prowl in every social group in every community, is regarded with speculative awe by the women of his circle, and with repressed envy by many of the men. Some women are titillated and excited, whether they admit it to themselves or not, because they have the distorted view that the wolf's many conquests are proof of an exceptional virility. And his "I-won't-mention-any-names-but-you-all-know-her" boastings cause many an average man to wonder whether his limited number of erotic successes doesn't indicate that there is something lacking in him.

There is no need for the normal man to worry. And as for the women, they are just making a Casanova out of a Milquetoast. For, as Dr. Edmund Bergler, an internationally respected psychiatrist who has made a long study of the subject, says in his book, *Divorce Won't Help*, "All wolves are... neurotic sissies."

Medical men have long been interested in what makes the predatory male tick, and the scientific literature on Don Juanism (as the profession calls the addiction to promiscuity in the male) shows how very false our popular conception is. Most of this literature is involved, clinical, and couched in terminology capable of paralyzing the most nimble tongue; and any attempt to describe Don Juanism in general terms involves, of necessity, oversimplification. But it is still possible to demonstrate that the wolf perpetrates a colossal hoax upon his misled victims. The man who feels a touch of envy or a twinge of self-deficiency as he contemplates a wolf's career is needlessly perturbing himself. He is likely to be much more virile, much more the truly dominant male, than the man he envies.

Medical men regard the wolf as a sick man. He is suffering from a deep-rooted neurosis, which takes the form of an insatiable hunger for sexual gratification—a hunger that has nothing in common with the normal procreative urge. In the wolf's frantic search of the contentment he never finds, he is behaving in exactly the same manner as the compulsive drinker, and for the same reasons. The role of women in the life of the wolf is identical with the role of whiskey in the life of an alcoholic.

The key to the enigma of the predatory male is the word "escape," just as it is the key to the performance of the compulsive (*Continued on page 132*)



I dub you Sir Knight

She was breathtakingly lovely, with damsel-in-distress eyes that called a knight in shining serge to the rescue

ILLUSTRATION BY GEORGE ENGLERT

The peripatetic Mr. Gunther takes you into diplomatic service for a tale of a retired knight errant who erred once more

A Story by
JOHN GUNTHER

Mr. Carterin, who was in his middle fifties now, looked out and down with mild appreciative interest at the earth wheeling sideways, and waited patiently for the plane to land. Nobody aboard, not even the pimply Puerto Rican steward who tried to impress everybody, had paid the slightest attention to him. Mr. Carterin was, however, fully accustomed to being neglected by people, who were apt to dismiss him after one glance at his dusty roly-polyness, his insignificant grey clothes, his appearance of having just been plucked out of a closet. Nevertheless, he had a fairly high opinion of himself, and the expression on his face was sometimes almost smug, even though he knew that he was wiser about the business of other people than about his own.

This was one of the last stops before Buenos Aires, and Mr. Carterin's trip would be half-done. Nina would have had his letter, sent air mail the day before, and he would be seeing her tomorrow evening. The wheels bumped with a squash at one end of the billowing, ill-defined airport, and he waited for the captain of the ship to march down the aisle and leave the plane before the passengers, as was the custom in these regions. He pulled on his coat, adjusted a cap that looked as if it might have been tossed away by Sherlock Holmes, and stepped out into the weightless mountain air.

The ambassador was a tall man with sharply parted, curly, iron-grey hair and deep valleys in his face. He carried himself stiffly. He came up to Mr. Carterin and introduced himself. Mr. Carterin was surprised and pleased at being met. "Very good of you to bother to meet me," he said.

"No bother at all. We don't have visitors very often." The voice was steely with formality.

It was high up here. Mr. Carterin puffed, walking up the graveled slope to the passport barrier. He had very red round cheeks. The exertion of walking made them redder.

"The altitude is, I must say, somewhat trying to most newcomers at first," the ambassador said, as Mr. Carterin paused for breath.

"Yes."

"We'll put you up," said the ambassador, whose name was Parquet. "The hotel isn't much. You'll be much more comfortable with us."

"Why, thanks," Mr. Carterin said. But his heart sank slightly. He disliked being put up at embassies. He found their stiffness confining, and he hated the necessity of being at a host or hostess' beck and call. He would have much preferred to be alone, no matter how uncomfortable the hotel. "Our place isn't so much either, though it's big enough. But it's better than the hotel."

"Good," replied Mr. Carterin, dismissing the matter.

"Now that every pip-squeak of a third secretary becomes an ambassador overnight, embassies are not, one might say, what they once were."

"I daresay," Mr. Carterin commented. There was venom in the ambassador's stiff voice. He almost seemed a parody of an ambassador.

Mr. Parquet hesitated as he prepared to show Mr. Carterin into his heavy car. "But would you prefer staying in the hotel? I don't want to force myself on you."

Testy creature, Mr. Carterin thought, but he looks as if he's had a lot of unhappiness. He murmured that he'd be delighted indeed to stay with the ambassador. What did it matter? There was no point in being unamiable.

"As we gathered from your wire, you'll be leaving on this same plane tomorrow morning?" Mr. Parquet said icily.

"Yes."

"I mean, on the plane tomorrow morning that leaves at the same time."

"That's correct."

"The one that leaves at the same time as the one you have just arrived on, I mean."

"I get it," Carterin said drily.

"Of course it's a different plane," the ambassador concluded.

So Mr. Carterin had twenty-four hours in this remote mountain community that liked to call itself a metropolis. The next hop would be straight through to B. A. Nina, who hated flying, had traveled down from New York by boat, and was waiting in B. A. to meet him. Then they would return up the east coast together by easy stages.

"My wife thought she'd have some of the local people in to dinner to meet you," the ambassador said. His manner was still sharp, but the voice was milder.

"How pleasant," Mr. Carterin replied. He groaned silently. There had been too many parties, and he would have enjoyed a quiet evening by himself.

"You're quite sure that it's all right with you if we have a few people in?"

"Of course. Why not?" Convention makes hypocrites of us all, Carterin sighed to himself. But the observance of convention saved a lot of time and energy.

"You know how wives are. I get profoundly sick, myself, at the amount of entertaining we have to do, to put it bluntly." The ambassador permitted himself the most arid of smiles. "You are married, Mr. Carterin?"

Was he! Carterin smiled.

"They blame the altitude." The ambassador shifted to a recurrent preoccupation. "People become fatigued. Tempers go awry." Mr. Carterin reflected that this was the first time he had ever heard the word "awry" said aloud. "It plays the devil with one's nerves to live at this altitude."

"I daresay," murmured Mr. Carterin.

"Your appointment with the President is arranged," the ambassador continued. "He will receive you at three this afternoon, probably for half an hour. I will accompany you."

"I do hope I'm not being a nuisance."

"Not at all. The rest of the afternoon is free for you to do with as you please. As to the Foreign Minister, he will, I believe, be honoring us"—the irony was marked—"with his presence at dinner this evening."

They reached the embassy, and Mr. Carterin went upstairs to his room and unpacked a bag. He gasped a little, sucking in the knife-sharp air. Mr. Carterin was a radio executive, doing a roundup of the South American countries, establishing affiliations with the various local stations; and, as a kind of unofficial good-will emissary of the State Department, he was calling on the leading political dignitaries in each capital. There came a knock on the door. He murmured a polite "Come in," and stepped back in surprise. It was not just the altitude that caused him to lose breath. This must be the ambassador's wife, and she was one of the most astonishingly beautiful women he had ever seen.

"I'm Mrs. Parquet. I wanted to see if you're quite comfortable."

"Why, thanks. Very good of you."

Maybe it was provincial of him to be so surprised. God knows one ran into beautiful women in the most unexpected places. But something in the appalling remoteness and primitiveness of this town perched inaccessibly on the edge of the great plateau, something of its barbarous quality that he had already grasped from a quick look at the steep muddy streets, made this sudden appearance of grace and beauty doubly surprising. He had no reason whatever to assume that Mr. Parquet would not have a lovely wife. Though fatigued and under obvious strain, Parquet was probably a very decent chap. At his age—he must be about Carterin's own age—he should have risen higher in the career and had a better post, but every kind of extraneous accident and nuisance, Carterin knew well, could frustrate and bedevil a career. Parquet had considerable distinction and there was certainly no valid reason why he should not have married this beautiful woman. Even so, Carterin could scarcely dissemble his surprise.

"I must say you're rather breath-taking," he said directly, and then shuddered slightly at his boldness. "But please pardon me for gaping at you like an idiot."

"Won't you sit down? At this altitude, it's an effort even to stand. However, I seem better able to endure it than most people. I've ordered coffee. I'm sure you won't mind a second breakfast. Perhaps you will be good enough to have it with me."

"I'd be delighted. But I have a round of calls to make."

"Jerry has arranged all that. You're to pick him up at the office in about an hour. Jerry's the most efficient man anybody ever met, Mr. Carterin."

"I'm sure. How long have you been living here?" He wanted to add, "on this dreary mountaintop."

"Three years. We're expecting a transfer at practically any moment. Jerry has given his whole life to Latin American affairs, and so doubtless the Department will pack us off to Iceland or South Africa."

They breakfasted quickly and Carterin observed her more closely. She was approaching that most remarkable of all invisible and dangerous frontiers, the one between youth and middle age. Her skin was milk-white and wonderful, but the backs of her hands were already a trifle taut. Hair the color of an old violin, eyes that were green in this light, but that could be hazel or even yellow out-of-doors, broad cheekbones, a sensitive abrupt mouth with a deep, soft underlip, and big, very white, perfectly formed teeth, so perfect that they almost seemed false. But the teeth smiled when her eyes did not.

"This has been very pleasant," Mrs. Parquet said, tossing down her napkin, "but Jerry will be waiting, and I'm afraid you have to go now."

"Thanks," Mr. Carterin said.

"We'll have another chance to talk at dinner."

"I hope so."

Carterin lunched with the ambassador and his staff at the

(Continued on page 126)

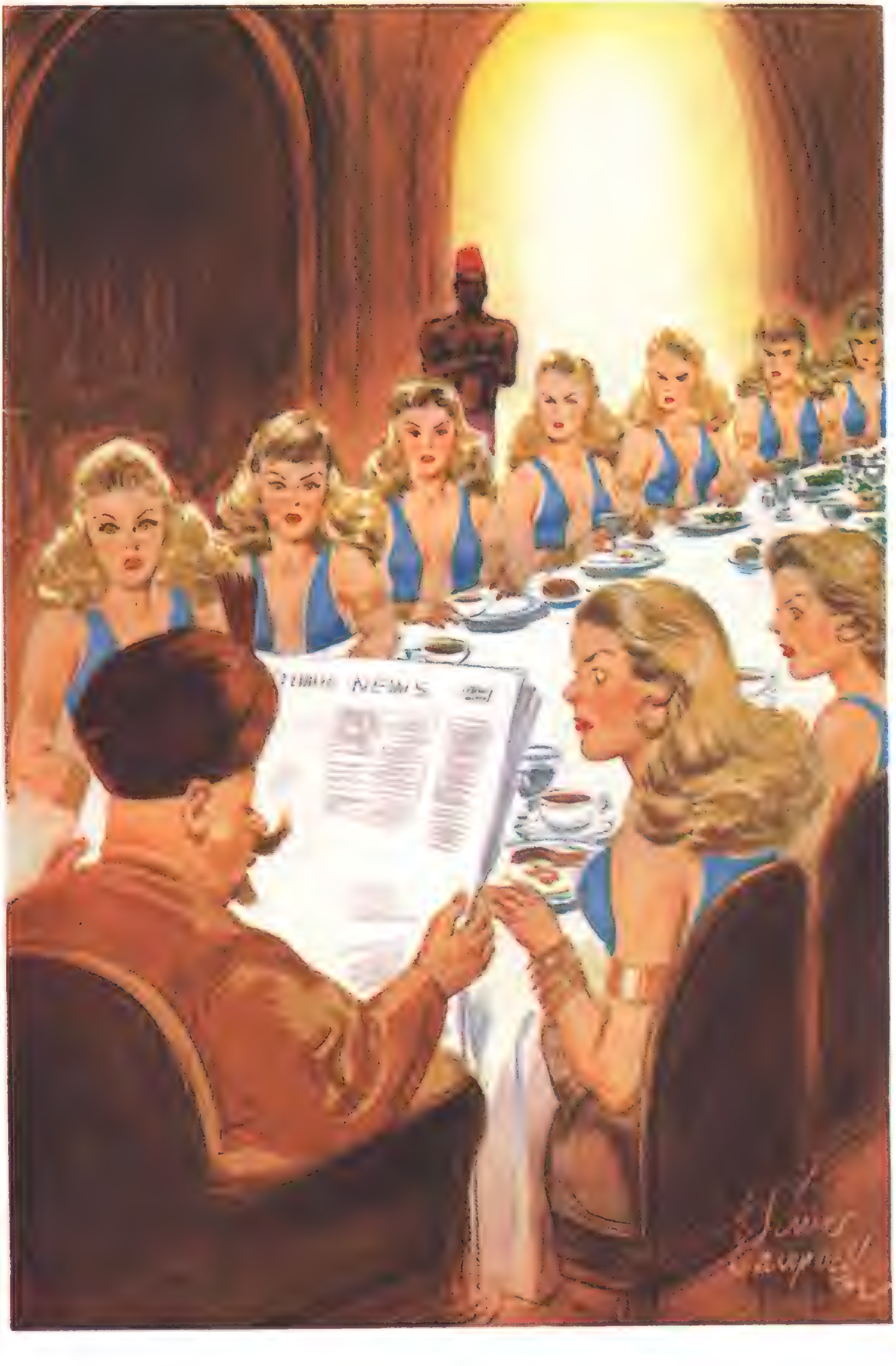

NEWS

PHOTO FROM LAKE PLACID CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Here Is Whiteface

For the experts—and their upended brethren, too—New York State has almost moved mountains to build one of the country's biggest publicly owned skiing centers

An Article by HAL BURTON

Five miles north of the village of Lake Placid in New York State, down a corridor of frosty hills, is the glittering cone of Whiteface Mountain, a forested peak with a startling resemblance to Fujiyama. Weather conditions on Whiteface were once a matter of complete indifference to everybody. This winter, however, the 14,000,000 citizens of New York are watching snow reports from this massive northern Adirondack peak with hawklike eyes.

The people of the State have invested $600,000 in Whiteface, to provide one of the biggest publicly owned skiing centers in the country, and one capable of expansion. This money has gone into a ski lift, ski trails, open slopes, lodges, paved highways, and all the other paraphernalia of a well-run winter sports center. The job isn't finished yet, either; if present plans go through, Whiteface will be a million-dollar superproject for skiers. This fine experiment in public recreation explains the average New Yorker's interest in snow: good business at Whiteface means a symbolic refund to the taxpayer.

The visiting skier who rides casually up the lift this winter and then etches his downward track on a shimmering slope or a sinuous trail is apt to take Whiteface for granted. Actually, though, no American ski center has been tougher to build.

Generally speaking, the development of a big skiing area is comparatively simple. A wealthy man, or a group of well-to-do sportsmen, picks out a suitable mountain and hires several experts with European backgrounds and difficult names to make a survey. Eventually, a ski lift is purchased for a few hundred thousand dollars and a crew of workmen starts hacking down trees and nailing cabins together. Then, when the snow comes tumbling down, the wily financier sits back, with a satisfied sigh, to watch the customers pile in. Whiteface, by contrast, has produced plenty of ulcers and migraine headaches for its sponsors. From the moment of its conception, a few years before the war, it has been the center of a continuous and violent debate.

You don't build a new factory without consulting the stockholders, and neither do you build a ski center on public lands in New York State without consulting the voters. Whiteface Mountain is in the State-owned Adirondack Forest Preserve, a 2,165,150-acre tract that is a part of the Adirondack State Park, and protected by the State Constitution which says that Adirondack trees are precious; you musn't cut them down. But skiers know that you have to cut down trees to build your trails and lifts. And so, through a long and painful process, the Constitution had to be amended.

The amendment, which finally went on the ballot in 1941, just squeaked through, after a battle in which old friendships were shattered all over the State. The Adirondack Mountain Club, split between skiers and conservationists, lost its president, who resigned in wrath at the tactics of those who supported Whiteface. Just before the election, Rockwell Kent, the artist, who has a farm at Ausable Forks, not far from the mountain, jumped into the fight.

"From my living room," he wrote the New York *Herald Tribune*, "I can look at the great east face of Whiteface Mountain. I do not want that view disfigured by ski trails 80 feet wide."

Unfortunately for Kent's argument, a racing trail a hundred feet wide already existed in plain sight of his living room. This trail had been constructed on a privately owned shoulder of Whiteface. In common with many others, Kent did not realize that ski trails leave practically no scar.

What seems to have saved the day for the ski center was the intervention of radio's noted commentator, Lowell Thomas. An ardent skier, Thomas, who makes it a rule never to take sides on political questions, broke this rule in 1941, the night before election day, to plead for the passage of the Whiteface Mountain Amendment. His unexpected support certainly helped to put the Amendment over.

And then, one month later, the country found itself at war, and Whiteface went into mothballs for the duration. It was not until 1947 that actual work on the ski center was begun.

This winter, some 50,000 skiers will visit Lake Placid, and most of them will commute to Whiteface for their skiing. In actual fact, though as- (*Continued in center of page 133*)

Caribbean Magic

Once a year, pent-up savage rhythms that didn't want to leave the Congo break out on the isle of Trinidad and explode all over Port of Spain in a dizzy, gaudy, gay, noisy revel

DANCERS in Trinidad don't just do a dance. They fight it, love it, live it—and succumb to it. They shed reason and restraint and join each other in a multicolored heaven-hell of rhythm, sensuality, license, and display. You can't define the dance, for it is anything a young man and his copper-skinned partner feel like doing at the moment. And you can't watch the dancers without being touched by their fire, without feeling emotions that would be out of place at the country club back home, or the Stork Club in New York. Properly behaved Europeans and North Americans visiting in Trinidad fall into the same rowdy frenzy and become, for the moment, one with the hellions and hoydens of the tropical island.

The reason for all this magnificent madness is carnival time in Port of Spain, Trinidad's principal city. Nearly all year long the incendiary temperaments of the people are held in check by government law. The whole town fifty weeks in a row is like Zanesville, Ohio, during Lent.

Then bang! Carnival!! For two weeks or so Port of Spain is lit up in a "wonderful razzle-dazzle, one of the dizziest, gaudiest, gayest, noisiest cities of the world, peopled by bacchanalian hordes of revelers and masqueraders moving in synchronization to strange music emanating from the weirdest variety of sound ever disgorged by musical instrument or human throat."* It's no place for Aunt Hepzibah, but it's just right for a guy with tingling toes, a taste for good rum, and a yen to forget for awhile that the fork on the far left is the one for the salad.

Putting aside the wild gyrations of impromptu dancing, there is a simple little step which, in a subdued form, may well become a new sensation in America, comparable to the conga and samba. It's called the calypso jump or jump-up. Find yourself a partner and then, to the tune of a good calypso song, it goes like this: Face each other, a few inches apart to permit freedom of movement. In rhythm to the music, lift your feet from the floor in a sort of canter, as distinguished from a gallop, and sway your bodies slightly forward and backward. (Stand back, Mr. Murray, *we've* got the floor.) Later, the couple turns outward, an arm around the other, facing the same direction. (See opposite page.) Now they begin "cantering" around the floor. Soon another couple pulls up abreast, then another and another until the line is as wide as the floor permits. And that's all there is to it, according to Earl Leaf, dance expert, from whose book, *Isles of Rhythm*, this description of the jump-up was taken.

A word about the music you'll hear in carnival time in Port of Spain. They trot out a crazy orchestra of ping-pongs, chac-chacs, qua-quas, talk-talks, kettles, brake bands, garbage-pail covers, almost anything that will make a noise when drummed or slapped. If you tried to imagine the sound, it would probably come out disagreeably cacophonous, like a concert of air hammers, bilge pumps, and old Fords. But down there in the hot tropical nights, in the precisely rhythmic hands of these rhythmic people, it becomes a throbbing, exotic music that is a perfect accompaniment to the strange, rich setting and the delirious goings-on.

The carnival hits its climax on the last four days before Shrove Tuesday midnight. Then things really get going. The merry-making never stops. For every exhausted reveler who leaves the streets, a new one returns to get rid of his hang-over and rejoin the fun. Have you ever tried making like New Year's Eve for four solid days and nights? It's an experience not soon forgotten.

Reprise (To be sung calypso style)

As they say in the travelogue
We go back home tired as a dog
We've spent our money and feel real bad
But man, just think of the fun we had
In Trinidad . . .

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*From Isles of Rhythm, by *Earl Leaf*, © *1948. Pub. by A. S. Barnes & Co.*

The calypso jump—with discreet variations—may easily be the next sensation to take over American dance floors. Two Trinidadians show you that if you can canter, you can dance it

KODACHROMES BY GEORGE BURNS

The Story Behind the Story

Population experts are polishing new estimates to catch up with the 14,000,000 of us they misplaced. It seems biology didn't stand still to be counted

An Article by

ROBERT D. POTTER

Nobody would claim that soothsaying is a particularly respectable profession. This country's economy is about as dependent on the vagaries of the average gypsy fortuneteller as it is on the life cycle of black cats. There are a couple of schools of prophecy, though, that are pretty important to you and me. The Weather Bureau, for example. It makes occasional mistakes, maybe, but its long-range predictions tend to be remarkably accurate, and a lot of things depend on them—air and sea travel, for one thing; and fuel supplies, for another.

More important, even, than our weather prophets are our population experts—the men who predict how many Americans will be cluttering up our roads twenty or a hundred years from now. It may seem to you that those fellows are just having a hell of a good time playing a complex and meaningless guessing game; but don't kid yourself. They're the people whose predictions determine how much food farmers ought to produce during the next few years, who help us plan for the housing and education needs of future generations. That's why their predictions ought to be right! And that, finally, is why it's a serious matter when they're not right.

Well, the sound of crashing branches and falling bodies that you may be hearing these days might well come from the gyrations of these population prophets. It takes considerable twisting and turning on the part of the layman to get his experts off the limb on which their forecasts have placed them.

Digging around in the dry statistics, one can uncover the story behind the story of experts who were caught off base by a little matter of twenty years in forecasting—or by having lost a mere 14,000,000 persons somewhere along the way.

The latest figure on the United States' population for 1948 is over 146,000,000 persons. If you remember nothing else, hang on to that figure of 146 millions as we proceed to stir up the dust in the statisticians' stock pile of population prophecies.

In 1931, one of our best statisticians, Dr. Louis I. Dublin, Vice-president of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, plotted a curve showing that without immigration the peak population of the United States would be reached at 148,000,000 persons in 1970. As things now stand, this figure will be reached by 1950—just twenty years ahead of Dr. Dublin's date.

Back in the early '30s, there was, as you may remember, a depression, and things looked glum. In 1934, Dr. O E. Baker, senior economist of Henry Wallace's Department of Agriculture, went even more bearish than Dr. Dublin. Going into a scientific huddle with himself over jobs available, production figures, plowed-under crops, and little pigs and people, Dr. Baker estimated that in the year 1948 the population of the nation would be 132,000,000 persons, and that then the decline would *really* start; the population, he said, would fall to 98,000,000 by 1990.

Now is the time to remember the 1948 census estimate of over 146,000,000 people. If that figure is correct, Dr. Baker was off base by about 14,000,000 persons.

The stumbling blocks to a perfect formula for estimating population changes are many: immigration rates, increasing industrialization and urbanization, prosperity, wartime draft and birth control are just a few. Such things are all-important because they affect the birth rate, and without birth-rate figures, a population forecaster has to close up shop.

Dr. Dublin climbed out on his limb because he assumed that the birth rate in 1940 would be 16.1 births per 1000 of population. Actually, though, the 1940 birth rate climbed to 19.5 births per 1000. In addition, he assumed that the 1950 birth rate would be down to 15 per 1000 of population. No one yet knows what will happen in 1950; but it's a significant fact that the birth rate rose to 27.1 per 1000 in 1947—almost double Dr. Dublin's grim prediction.

Unless the United States is ready to turn into a China or an India, no one expects Americans to keep up the present peak of baby production. But the point is that Dr. Dublin underestimated population growth by about twenty years when he forecast a population of 148,000,000 in 1970.

Curiously, one population estimate—made back in 1921 by Professor Raymond Pearl of Johns Hopkins University—looks better and better as the years go by. In 1921, the late Professor Pearl and his associate, Professor L. J. Reed, said the U. S. would have 148,678,000 inhabitants by 1950—a figure that will be close to the bull's-eye.

It's hard to be better than perfect, but in the next half century Professor Pearl may gain still higher esteem. Other forecasters have predicted a population drop in the years from 1950 to 2000. Professor Pearl, in contrast, asserted that the maximum population for the U. S.—about 196,681,000—would come well after the year 2000.

The Pearl forecasts are based on the so-called curve of "biological growth," which applies to many species of life, from colonies of bees, insects, rabbits, foxes, fish, and so on, to man himself.

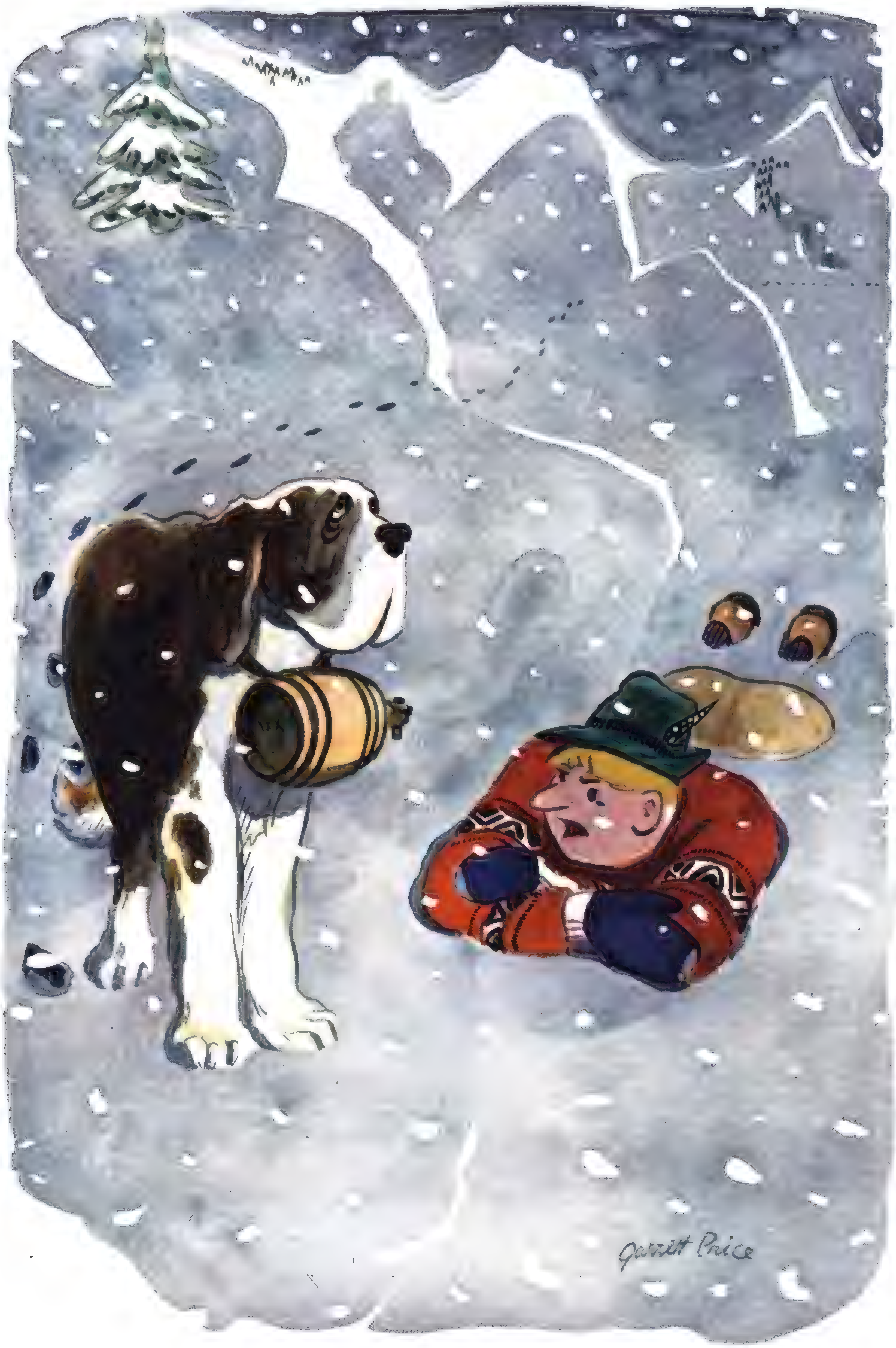
Back in the early 1930's, with the economic depression and unsettled conditions, the estimates of Professor Pearl fell into disrepute and statisticians predicted declining populations. But it appears now that in the long run the temporary fluctuations of depressions, prosperity, wars, and peace average out and are just little wiggles and creases on the basic biological law of growth for mankind.

Whether the atom bomb can turn the creases into canyons is something else again. Birds, bees, fishes, and foxes have no such superb means of self-destruction.

The moral of our story, however, is that it's all very well to sit back and be a second-guesser, but someone has to crawl out on the limbs and make these population estimates. Too many things that are important to the nation hinge upon such forecasts. Food supply, housing, education, and social security are just a few.

Yes, someone has to make the forecasts and do the limb-crawling. Fortunately, statisticians are a hardy breed. Down they may fall, on occasion, when a limb breaks off. But they crawl right back up again, vowing that the next time they'll be right. Sometimes they are. ⵌ

"The advertisements for this cruise distinctly stated 'no planned entertainment'!"


Garrett Price

"I see you've forgotten the glasses again"

The Devil and Lady Godiva

If your woman wants a new dress, don't tell her to go to the devil, unless . . .

A Story by

I. G. MATTINGLY

THE Devil was growing garrulous on the topic of women. His second or third wormwood cassis, his Disciple observed, often had that effect on him. One by one, various minor devils had edged their way out of the cocktail lounge of the Satanic Club on rather obvious pretexts. One said he had to find some work for idle hands to do; a second had to see a man about a dogma; a third had to sit up with a sick fiend. And sheer inertia kept the Disciple from leaving his mentor to gabble to an empty room.

"Now take Godiva," said the Devil. "There was a woman for you!"

"You refer," said his Disciple, "to the celebrated wife of the Earl of Mercia, who rode naked through Coventry to free its citizens from her husband's oppressive taxation?"

"That is the highly inaccurate version of the story which one commonly hears," said the Devil. "But if you'll order me another wormwood cassis, I'll give you the real facts in the case."

The Disciple sighed, and, accepting the inevitable, rang the service bell.

The Dark Ages (said the Devil), as certain obtuse historians customarily call them, were one of the busiest periods in my career. Business had never been so good. A plague here, a famine there, a Mongol horde somewhere else again—let me tell you, I had my work cut out for me. Nevertheless, gallantry is my middle name, and when, shortly before the Norman Conquest, the glamorous and gracious Lady Godiva, wife of the Earl of Mercia, exclaimed to herself, "I'd sell my soul to knock some sense into that oaf's head," I was at her side immediately.

Godiva was a tall, beautiful woman, with long blonde hair of which she was extremely proud. She was sitting in her bedroom in Coventry Castle, staring gloomily at a closet full of dresses, when I materialized behind her. She gave a slight start, but recognized me immediately.

"Well, that was quick, I must say!" she said.

"What seems to be the trouble, my lady?" I asked, making a low bow.

"Trouble?" she said bitterly. "Look at these moth-eaten old rags." I looked. Offhand, I should have said that there were at least twenty or thirty attractive dresses in that closet, but it is not for us males to speculate on such matters. "I haven't had a new dress since 1050," she went on. "I hardly have enough decent clothes to cover my back."

"Why can't you get some more?"

"It's that stupid husband of mine. He says he can't afford it."

"Can he?"

"He could, if he ran his business right. But here he is, Earl of Mercia and Lord of Coventry, and he hardly oppresses the peasants with taxation at all. Now can you tell me how on earth an earl can make money unless he oppresses the peasants? What are peasants for?"

"What, indeed?"

"Look at Anne of Northumbria. Every time I see her she has a new frock. And why? Because it's well known that the Earl of Northumbria oppresses his peasants more efficiently than any other earl in the realm. But Leofric just dawdles around the garden in his old clothes, transplanting petunias. Who ever heard of a self-respecting Saxon earl wasting his time with petunias? He hasn't oppressed a peasant in months. And I want a new dress *so* badly." Her anger dissolved into tears.

Gallantly I whipped out my handkerchief and came to her assistance. I had already formed a low opinion of Leofric. If she needed a new dress, she needed a new dress, and Leofric was a cad not to give it to her.

"Come, come, my dear," I said, when she was a little calmer. "Let's be constructive. If you'll just sign this little paper for form's sake, I think we can arrange to get you all the dresses you want."

"You're an angel!" said Godiva, throwing her arms about me. I realized that Godiva was being inaccurate, rather than insulting, so I overlooked this remark.

"Now then," I said, after she had signed the contract and I had pocketed it. "Something must be done to remind Leofric of his duties and obligations as a husband." I thought for a minute. "I have it," I said. "Tell him that unless you get a new dress, you'll show the world how much you need one by riding naked through the streets of Coventry, covered only by your long golden hair." I thought the plan very appropriate, especially since I had conceived it on the spur of the moment.

"Oh!" she said. "What a wonderful idea! Leofric would be horrified at the very thought of such a thing!" But then she had a second thought. "There's no chance I'd really have to do it, is there? That would be awful."

"Of course not. The very suggestion will make him back down. But in the highly unlikely case that it doesn't, I'll ride through Coventry in your place, disguised as Lady Godiva." She smiled happily. I kissed her hand and dematerialized.

I allowed her a day or so to break the news to Leofric, and then appeared to him in his garden. Leofric was a little man with white hair and a scraggly mustache. He was transplanting a petunia, but I could see his mind wasn't on his work. "Oh dear," he kept muttering to himself. "Oh dear oh dear oh dear!"

So as not to surprise him, I had adopted the guise of a British peasant. "Hail Leofric, Earl of Mercia and Lord of Coventry," I said.

"Now see what you've made me do," he said. "I'll have to transplant that petunia all over again!" He straightened up. "What can I do for you?"

"I thought I could do something for *you*. You seem upset."

"Oh, just family affairs. Nothing you need worry about. Who are you, anyway?"

"I have a good many names," I said. "Mephistopheles, Diabolus, Beelzebub—take your pick."

He gazed into my glittering eyes for a minute, and slowly understood. Then he started to run. I grabbed him quickly by the coattails. "Here, here," I said. "That's no way for a British earl to behave. I'm here to help you. Now just tell me your troubles."

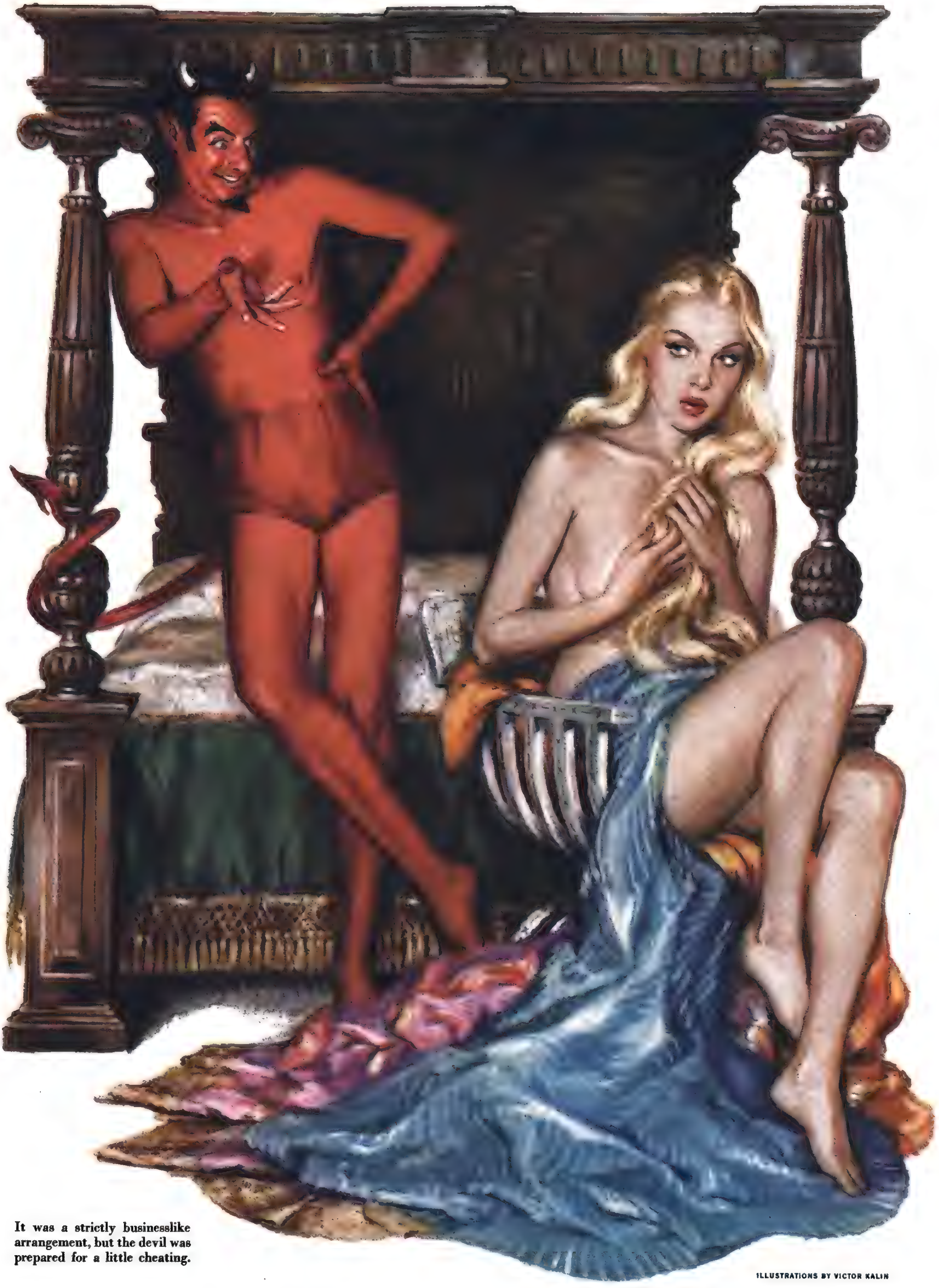
For a while he stared at me timidly, and then he said, "*You* probably would think it was all pretty small potatoes. It's just that my wife always wants new clothes. And I can't pay for them unless I oppress peasants. And I'd much rather work in my garden than oppress peasants. And now she says that unless she has a new dress she'll ride naked through Coventry, covered only by her long golden hair. Oh, dear! I can't bear oppressing peasants, but if I don't, she'll make me the laughing stock of Coventry. I don't know *what* to do."

"Keep a stiff upper lip, Leofric," I said. "I'll tell you what to do. Be firm. Don't budge an inch. In your treatment of the peasantry you're a thousand years ahead of your time. Now just sign here, and I'll guarantee Godiva won't ride naked through Coventry."

"What's that?" he said. "A pledge? Last time I signed something in Latin it turned out to be a pledge of £500 to King Harold."

"No, nothing like that. Just routine. Sign here," I said firmly. Leofric signed. "Now," I said, "just tell your wife she can do as she pleases; you don't care. And I guarantee she won't humiliate

(*Continued at top of page 92*)



It was a strictly businesslike arrangement, but the devil was prepared for a little cheating.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY VICTOR KALIN

Dialogue with Action

A record of some brisk and not-at-all casual conversation between a man who made many promises and a woman who got tired of waiting for him to deliver

A Story by

WILLIAM FRANCIS

While she straightened her hat in the mirror, I sat and looked at the trim lines of her back. Over her shoulder I could see her face in the mirror—and the blonde upswept hair-do and the brown eyes and the classic nose and the red, red lips, full and soft-looking. I could see the upper part of her body, with the shiny smooth material of her dress stretched taut by her upraised arms.

"You know what you're doing," I said.

"I know *what* and you know *why*, Sam."

She didn't meet my eyes in the mirror. She finished with the hat—a scrap of lace and a couple of flowers—and then she took a lipstick and ran it over her lips.

"He's a louse, Gina," I said.

"*I* said that, remember? What time is it?"

"You've got a half-hour," I said.

She patted a powder puff under her eyes and then moistened her eyebrows with the tip of her little finger.

"Not even a church," I said.

"I like it better this way, Sam. Due process of law, you know." She wiped a fleck of lipstick from a front tooth.

"Member of the harem," I said.

"He didn't marry any of the others."

She turned her head and looked at me over her shoulder. I shrugged and she turned back.

"Still time to call it off," I said.

"Quit it."

Now she was idly pushing a nail file across the tip of one of her fingernails.

"You're going to hate it," I said.

"I hate it now." She took a wisp of a handkerchief from the table and dabbed at her eyes with it. I didn't move.

"You're only hurting yourself," I said.

"I know." She picked up the powder puff, carefully patted it beneath the eyes again.

"Of course, it'll give you an opportunity to knife me," I said.

"That I'll enjoy." But she didn't look like she was going to enjoy it.

"You must hate me a lot," I said.

"As much as I ever loved you, Sam."

I lit a cigarette. "I won't be hurt as much as you are," I said.

"You never were."

I butted the cigarette. It tasted like burnt beans.

"You believe what he told you," I said.

"I believe what I saw, Sam. Shall we go?"

I looked at my watch. "Still fifteen minutes," I said.

"Why wait?"

I got up and walked over to her and put my hands on her bare shoulders.

"You used to believe in me," I said.

"I used to believe in Santa Claus, fairy tales, love stories that ended happily, and a guy called Sam. Now I don't. Now I believe in taking the main chance and in getting even. Take your hands away, Sam. It'd just be something more to tell him."

I didn't take my hands away.

"Tell him I still love you," I said.

"Sure. Sure. I'll tell him everything. He'll break you into little pieces while I watch."

I leaned over and kissed her behind the ear.

"Tell him that too," I said.

"I will. I'll tell him all about Honest Sam, the guy who made love to his boss' girl while the boss trusted him. I'll tell him the promises that you made me and the things you said about him. I'll tell him about the trip to the lake and all those Sundays we spent together when he was in Chi. I'll tell him all that and about the ring and the wires and the letters and the late dates."

I tilted her face back and kissed her on the lips. She was very passive.

"You don't hate me," I said.

"No. No, I don't really, I guess. I'm tired of lies and promises I know you'll never keep. I don't hate you, Sam, I'm just tired."

I kissed her again. She was still very passive.

"I didn't lie to you," I said. "I never lied to you."

"He didn't know anything about us, Sam. I don't believe he had any idea about us. I asked him where you were, and, when he told me, I went to your place and found you there with that girl. He didn't frame that, Sam."

I took my hands off her shoulders, and she twisted around to look at me. I walked back and sat down.

"The girl was passed out. He told you it was mine, but it was his. He wouldn't tell you that, though," I said.

"You wouldn't tell me that either, Sam. Why?"

I lit another cigarette. "You didn't give me a chance," I said.

"I didn't because that was the last straw. What about the promise that we'd go away and that you'd break with him? What about the wedding and the other things? If you were afraid of him, why didn't you tell me so? Why did you just keep making promises you had not the slightest intention of keeping?"

I butted the cigarette. This one tasted like burnt oatmeal.

"I'm not afraid of him. I needed him. I didn't want life in a trailer. He needed me and he was paying me. I wasn't taking charity or licking boots. Maybe I was too smart. Maybe I should have kicked everything in the face because you and I found each other, but I didn't see it that way. I saw it my way. I saw us together with more than just each other. If there was no other way, I'd have played it just the way it had to be played. My way had a future," I said.

"It's too late now, Sam. It's time to go."

She turned back to the mirror and began to repair the lipstick.

"It's never too late," I said.

"Yes it is. It is this time, Sam. No matter what he is or how lousy, I couldn't run out now. Two hours ago, a day ago, if you'd come and told me, I would have—but not now. He never really hurt me and I can't do a thing like this to him."

I walked over and put my hands on her shoulders again.

"You don't have to," I said.

"What do you mean?"

I leaned down and kissed her behind the ear.

"I didn't come here to take you to the City Hall, Gina. I came here to take you away. I've told him. I told him this morning."

"You told him about us? What happened?"

I grinned down at her.

"I just told him that you weren't going to marry him and that you were going to marry me because we're so much in love. He didn't like it at first, but I managed to make him see the right of it. He saw it," I said.

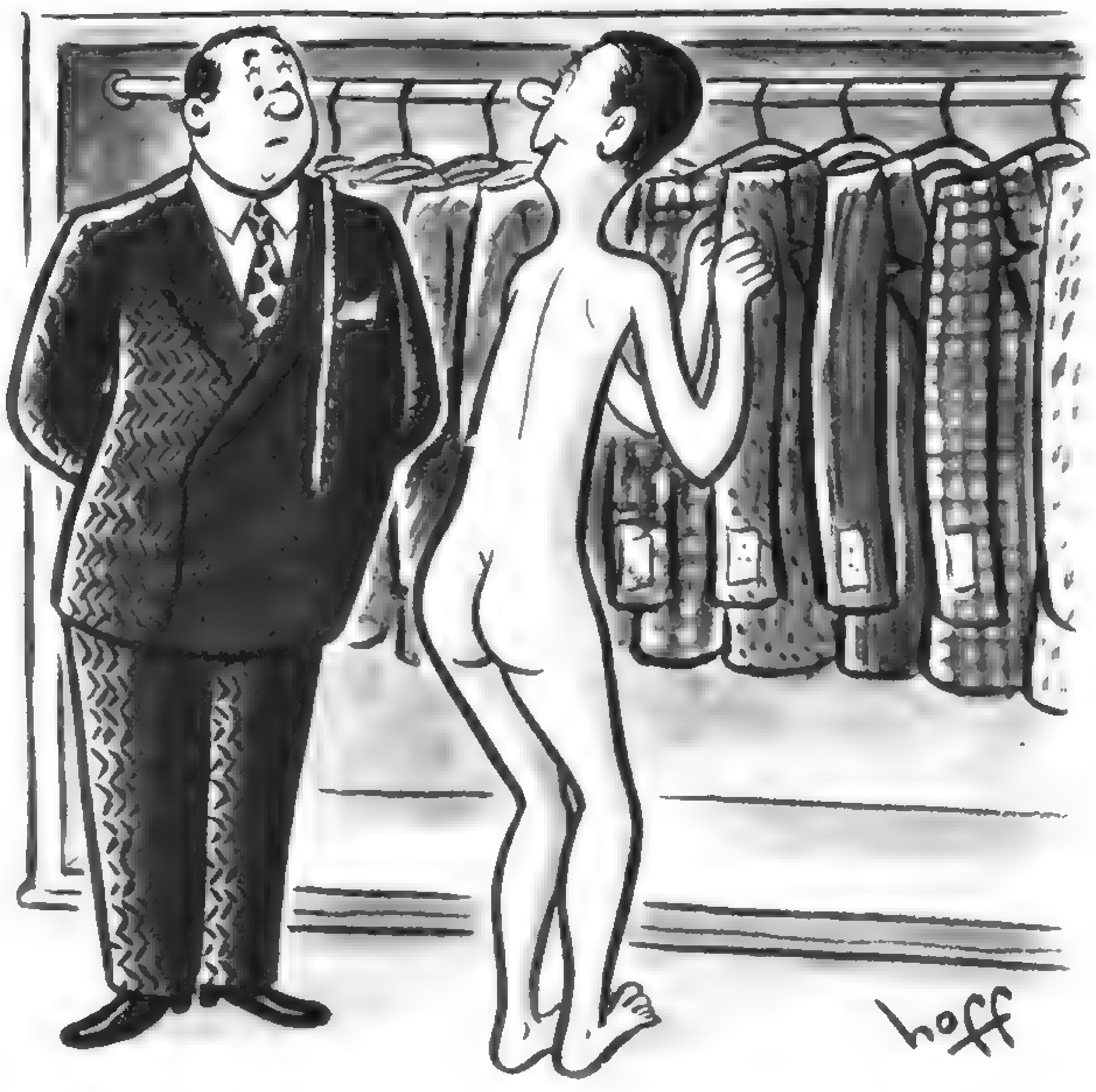
"And he isn't waiting for me? He doesn't expect me?"

I tilted her head back and kissed her. She wasn't passive.

"No, darling Gina," I said.

"Oh, Sam."

We went out holding hands. #



"No thanks, I'm just looking!"

Fisherman's DREAM

THERE are as many dreams as fishermen, yet it would seem this is one to top even old Izaak Walton's wildest, as he followed a placid stream across the countryside, angling for the elusive dace. And even this fisherman might find it hard to say why he stands for hours with a pole in hand, dangling a thread with a feather on it, or flipping it back and forth in a halting imitation of a darting insect. Probably the truth is that a man can eat a fish if he can catch it: and the rest —as you see—is sheer poetry.

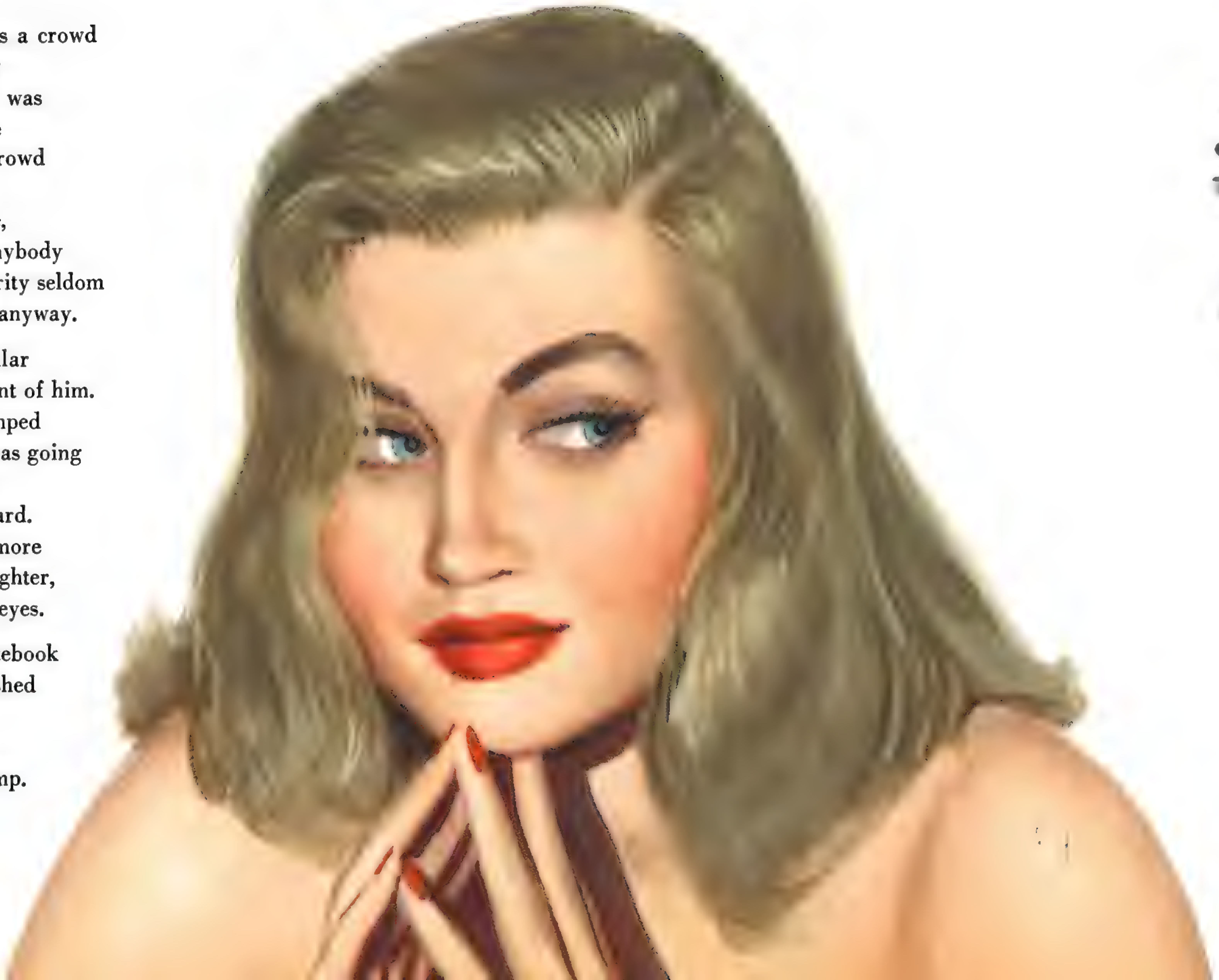
KODACHROME BY RAY ATKESON

Checkermate

The Charity Bazaar was jammed. There was a crowd around the booth where a magician was sawing a pretty girl in half. An even larger crowd was buying kisses at five dollars each from three of last year's debutantes. But the largest crowd of all was waiting in front of Sally's booth. Sally, wearing a gaily polka-dotted costume, played checkers for Charity against anybody who was willing to risk ten dollars a game. Charity seldom lost, but the patrons got their money's worth anyway.

When Harry's turn came he put down a ten dollar bill and moved a checker on the board in front of him. So did Sally. He moved again. Sally jumped three of his men. Harry could see Charity was going to win this one, but he moved again anyhow and tried watching Sally instead of the checkerboard. Sure enough, just before she took two or three more of Harry's checkers, a certain look—half laughter, half pure menace—came into Sally's eyes.

"Hold it," said Harry. He took out his notebook and made a quick sketch, and then they finished the game. He lost, but he learned something: when a woman looks at you like Sally did then, it means she's going to jump.



Al Moore

The Man Who Wouldn't Say Uncle

A bright mechanical engineer with a taste for rough problems should have known that March 15 is no time to flex your cranial muscles and try to beat the rap

An Article by

LEN ZINBERG

It was a simple little thing—a can opener, in fact—that caused all the trouble in Mr. Anderson's placid life.

One night, as he dropped into a near-by bar for his usual post-supper glass of beer, the bartender asked, "Say, Mr. Anderson, ain't you a mechanical engineer?"

Anderson admitted that he'd been an engineer for the past thirty years. "There's a young fellow," the barkeep whispered, "who wants to meet you. I mean, I told him about you—he's got an invention."

So Anderson and the young man had a few beers, and the young man finally showed him drawings of a new can opener he had just patented. "I got this idea while I was a mess sergeant in the Army," he said. "Now I'm all set to go, except I need an engineer to design the various machines for the factory. I can't offer you what the job is worth, but I can give you $400."

Mr. Anderson had nothing special to do with his evenings, and no special need for extra money. He was earning $5000 a year, and that was more than enough for his simple bachelor life. But he said he'd do it.

Three weeks later, he delivered a set of blueprints to the young man, who was obviously impressed by the drawings, but seemed unhappy. "I'm sorry," he said, "but the rent and the high cost of materials . . ."

"You're not going to open your factory?"

"Oh, I'm going to open, but it cost more than I expected. The fact is, I'm broke." He hesitated. Then: "I know it looks like I pulled a quickie on you," he went on, "so I drew up an agreement giving you fifty bucks in cash and twenty-five per cent of the first year's profits as the balance of your fee. I'm really sorry, but if this goes over like I expect—well . . ."

That was in February. In November, Mr. Anderson got a letter from the young man happily informing him that the can opener was a sensation and that Mr. Anderson's share of the profits was $50,000, certified check inclosed. Mr. Anderson marveled at his good fortune, but was shocked to find that the income tax on this came to over $23,000. There was no ducking it, either; the government would be sure to track down such a sum.

Mr. Anderson decided this was only a problem, put his engineer's mind to work, and found a way to beat Uncle Sam out of some of the money . . .

The next morning, Mr. Anderson opened accounts in two banks and deposited $25,000 in each. A few months later, in January, he rented a room in Newark, New Jersey, under the name of Frank Stewart. He told the landlady he was a salesman, on the road most of the time. Then he rented a room under the name of Oliver Huggins in Westport, Connecticut.

In the following two months, Mr. Anderson visited his "rooms" now and then to establish his double alias; and on March 15th, in company with the rest of his fellow Americans, he filed a tax return on his regular salary. He waited a few weeks, then went to his Newark room and wrote a letter to the New Jersey Office of Internal Revenue, informing them that a certain Charles Anderson of New York City had not paid any tax on $25,000 he had in a bank. He gave the name of the bank and told how Mr. Anderson had made the money. He was reporting this, he said, as an indignant citizen—but, since times were bad with him, he wanted the informer's fee. He signed the letter Frank Stewart and gave his Newark address. Then, up in Westport a day or so later, he repeated the process by writing, under the name of Oliver Huggins, to the Connecticut Office of Internal Revenue and giving the name of Charles Anderson's *other* bank.

Mr. Anderson returned to his New York apartment and waited. A few days later, he received a letter asking him to report to the Internal Revenue Bureau in New York City. There he was interviewed by a tax agent who said, "Mr. Anderson, we have located two accounts, each for $25,000, that you have in two banks. In your tax return, there is no mention of this $50,000. Why?"

"Why, I thought I only had to pay tax on my regular salary," Mr. Anderson said. "This was some outside work I did. I won't get into any trouble about it, will I?"

"She never forgets a face, but she's getting very nearsighted"

"We usually don't start criminal action unless we suspect fraud," the agent said.

"*Criminal* action? But I've always been a decent, honest man. Paid all my taxes, right on time. I'm sorry I was so stupid, but I didn't understand."

"In that case, I think you'll be all right. Because you're late in filing a return, you'll probably be fined a small percentage. I shall recommend that this be considered an honest error on your part."

"I assure you I had no intention of cheating," Anderson said quickly. "I don't know anything about taxes and laws. I'll do anything your office says."

A little later, Anderson paid $25,000 in back taxes. He kept visiting his rooms in New Jersey and Connecticut, and soon there were letters to both Stewart and Huggins from their respective Bureaus of Internal Revenue. The full informer's fee was ten per cent of the tax collected; and so Oliver Huggins and Frank Stewart each eventually received a check for $1250.

The checks were deposited in local banks; and, a month later, Mr. Anderson withdrew both sums, told his landladies he was going West—and returned to New York City, $2500 richer. It was not a lot of money, and collecting it had involved several hundred dollars in expenses, but to Mr. Anderson the extra money represented half a year's salary. What was much more—he had solved a "problem" successfully.

He went on living as he always had, but over his beers he liked to think of himself as the one man who had outsmarted the "whole darned United States."

A year later, a man from the Internal Revenue Bureau came to see him.

"You want to see *me*?" Mr. Anderson said.

"You and Frank Stewart and Oliver Huggins," the special agent said.

"Stewart? Huggins? I'm afraid I don't understand," Anderson said, his voice shaking.

"I'm afraid I *do*," the agent said. "You'd better come with me—Mr. Anderson-Stewart-Huggins. This is a clear case of fraud. We can't figure you out —you have plenty of money, you didn't gain much by all this. Why did you do it?"

Anderson mumbled something about a "problem."

"Have to admit you were pretty clever—almost got away with it," said the man. "Only our Connecticut office couldn't locate Huggins, and Newark couldn't find Stewart. We checked the descriptions, then the signatures on the checks—and they all added up to you."

Anderson asked, weakly, "But why—why did you want to find Huggins and Stewart?"

The special agent grinned. "Why, for nonpayment of income tax on the rewards we gave them! Shall we go now?" ###

the TIMID angel

by jeff conover

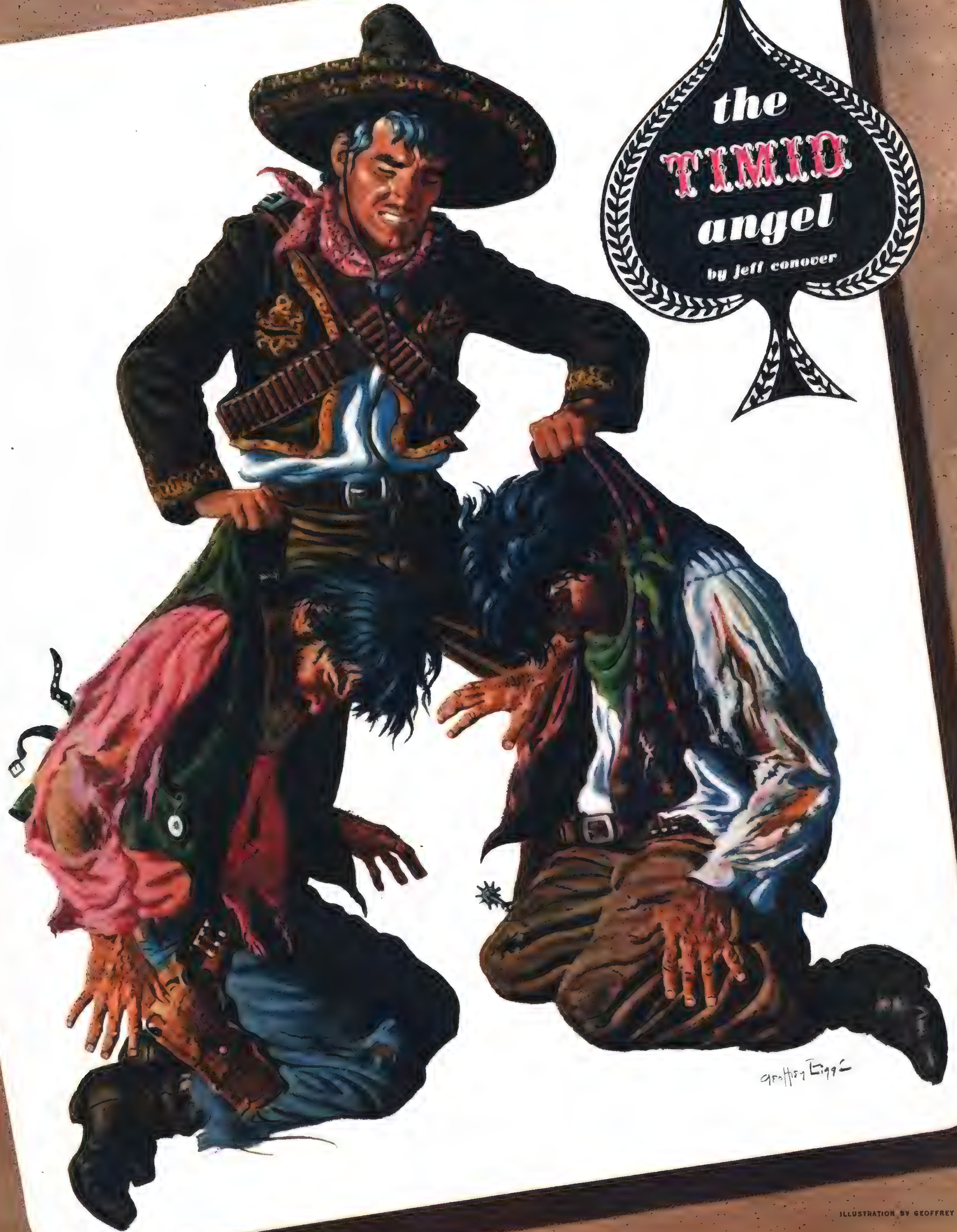


ILLUSTRATION BY GEOFFREY BIGGS

The rustlers shoved the quiet Easterner around until his sure eye and wounded pride exploded into lightning action

EDGAR TUTWILER was a blond young man from the civilized city of Philadelphia, where the hall of records was a building with records in it, written in precise language and script and properly filed. In 1859 in Los Angeles, California, the records that had not been lost or stolen from its hall of records were mostly written in spidery, illegible Spanish.

In Los Angeles, the sun hung in the air like God's branding iron, and twenty per cent of the male population were gamblers or pimps. It was hot and dusty. Indian laborers on benders from near-by farms got into drunken brawls and white men strode the streets, stooping under the weight of a pocketful of octagonal fifty-dollar gold pieces. In the beef-hungry mining camps to the north, they spoke of Los Angeles in awed tones as a "tough town." It had a permanent population of only four thousand or so, but it gave refuge to all sorts of thieves, murderers, and cutthroats.

The town was surrounded by ranges where the Spanish grant-holders ran enormous herds of cattle for themselves and various rustlers. It was the kind of land where a man could lose forty thousand acres and eight thousand head of cattle and never get them back.

Edgar Tutwiler, after six weeks of searching records, knew that, and he wanted to go home. But he wanted his land and his cattle—and he wanted Candace Forest. Candace lived with her father, Major Forest, outside the town; and she was high-breasted, high-spirited, demure, daring, and slim. Edgar's heart thumped at the thought of her and pounded when he saw her. It sank, though, when he thought of Jonathan Gault.

He was thinking of Jonathan Gault as he slumped into a chair in Pete Biggs' barbershop. Pete Biggs was a black, portly, bilingual gossip, diplomat, and social arbiter. He could also trim whiskers and cut hair.

"Pete," Edgar said, "who have you seen going in next door—the record place—well, kind of frequent during the last few months?"

"Nobody much," said Pete. "Nobody much 'ceptin' Mr. Jonathan. But he got the run of the place most anywhere."

Jonathan Gault was a lean, handsome man who was making a fortune selling cattle bought from the Spanish grandees to the northern gold-mining camps. He wore silver spurs as big as saucers and tight-fitting pants. It was said that he was engaged to Candace Forest.

"Somebody's stolen a paper out of there," Edgar said. "It's an important paper. Got a name on it . . ." His voice trailed off as Pete swathed his face with a wet towel. Back in Philadelphia, it had sounded fine from the exuberant letters that Elisha Farrow had written. A gold strike traded for forty thousand acres of land and eight thousand head of cattle! And when the news of Elisha's death had come, with a will bequeathing all his land and cattle to Edgar, it had seemed like an easy thing to come out West and take title to them. That's what you did with an estate in the East, where things were civilized. Pete removed the towel. "Man named Elisha Farrow," Edgar finished. "He was my uncle."

Pete Biggs, unheeding, stiffened. There was a good deal of noise outside, and both Pete and Edgar hurried to the door to see what was going on. Out into the dusty street, men were pouring from Gresham Greeley's Oroport Saloon. A slim man, all in black, was backing daintily away from the door of the saloon, his hands at his sides; and a big, bearded, dirty man was moving after him. The big man held a gun, and the crowd fanned out, giving the two figures plenty of room in the hot sun. Finally, the black-clad figure paused in the middle of the street. The dust rose and puddled in the air and settled, and the crowd grew still. The soft voice of the man in black carried in the white, hot air, as he spoke. "Do you have silver bullets in your gun, Mr. Streeter?"

"Draw!" the big man growled. "I'm gonna kill you whether you do or don't." He aimed carefully and, a moment later, fired.

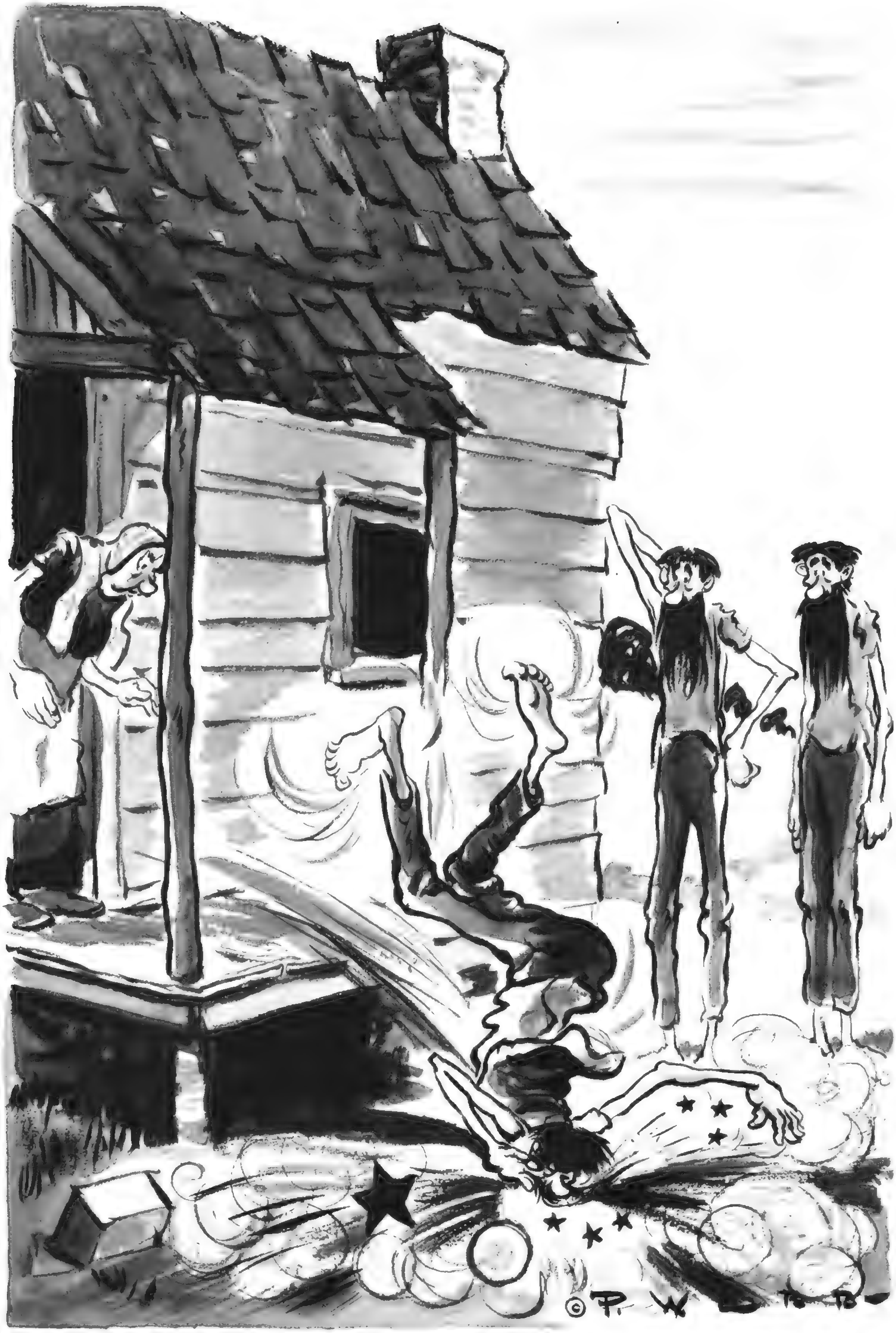
The black figure staggered back, and black cloth was torn above his heart. The powder smoke was black and acrid, and it mixed with the dust.

Slowly, with nerve-snapping deliberation, the black-clad figure let his hand go to his belt; when it emerged, it held a long slim knife. You could hear him whisper. He was icily amused. "No silver bullets, Mr. Streeter?"

The man called Streeter fired again, steadying his gun hand with the other. Again the black figure was driven staggering back; again there was the horrible wait for him to fall. Again he spoke. "I'm going to cut your heart out, and give it to the dogs." He walked forward.

Streeter fell to his knees. Then, with a cry, he leaped up and threw his gun at the man, stumbled, and fled wildly through the crowd.

The black-clad man shrugged, replaced his knife in its hidden sheath, and walked to a big grey stallion tethered at the rail. He mounted the horse and said loudly, "No mortal man can kill *(Continued on page 95)*



"Damn Paw! The front steps is missin' . . . Ah wondered where he was gittin' that fireplace kindlin' the day it snowed"

Can Can

The dance that put oo in oo-la-la is as much a symbol of Gay Paree as the Eiffel Tower. But note, m'sieur: There's more to le can can than black stockings, petticoats, pretty legs

PHOTOGRAPH BY MUKY

QUEEN VICTORIA, you will not be surprised to learn, was no admirer of the can can. But the good lady who owes so much to Helen Hayes was wrong again—the can can seems to be here to stay. It is, of course, only to be expected that when you are settling back to the enjoyment of the latest Western, and the lights in the wicked saloon have been dimmed, and the square-jawed hero momentarily forgotten, just then the pulsing strains to ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay inevitably sound forth, and out comes a pony ballet of can-can girls. Rough Western types, guzzling their beer, get a terrific kick out of the girls making like horses, and fluffing their skirts in the air, and the boys are like to swoon when the chorus finally gyrates lower limb and knee in an exotic pattern which permits a full look at the calf every minute or so. Bowery scenes, ditto. Likewise, when Americans desert Earmuff Falls, North Dakota, for the saucy blandishments of Paris, they are also minded to save one bucket of night-glowing red paint for place Pigalle. There, in cafés like the Bal Tabarin, they happily take a quick course in French culture via the bouncy rhythms of the can can. (Originally the dance was called the chahut, but some genius changed the name.) After a tangle with the censors, the dance reached its popularity peak in the nineties when Frenchmen flocked to the Café Moulin Rouge to be titillated by a frolicsome foursome who could rend the prescribed five gyrations of the dance in the proper fetching manner. It is probably heresy to question why such an essentially Victorian buck-and-wing is still a stand-by in our glittering pleasure palaces today where the sophisticated gather, but—aided somewhat by the photograph above—we prefer to think that there must be something still devilish about a dance Papa never was able to see in mixed company. And as we look again, maybe father was right, after all. #

Shakespeare wrote about the "still-vexed Bermoothes," which shows he lived too soon. Obviously, there's nothing vexed about Bermuda today: plenty of warm sun, pink sand and other soothing features

(Kodachromes by: above, Edward Ozern; opposite page by: top, Richard Joseph; left, Union Pacific, right, Shostal.)

SECOND OF A SERIES OF VACATIONS
"PLANNED FOR THE MAN" BY ESQUIRE

Yours for the Basking

Nassau has scenes like this, balmy weather, eager fish and a beach called Paradise

There are hot spots in the sun countries—as we told you last month—or, for the man who would recharge body and soul with the goodness of peace and beauty, this catalogue of the rest things under the sun

A Travel Article by RICHARD JOSEPH

It takes a really rich man to go off on a March vacation these days.

Rich not necessarily in dollars—though that helps—but also rich in leisure, rich in independence, and rich in the freedom of spirit that gives a man the power to say to hell with everything when he's had enough and to point his nose someplace where the sun is shining and life is good.

After all, it doesn't require much imagination or initiative to plan a summer vacation. That's been going on since the first Caesar ruled that Rome was intolerable in July, tossed a clean toga and a towel into his chariot, and drove off for the Lido. And, in recent years, the midwinter vacation has become almost as popular with men able to convince themselves and their associates that a week or ten days on skis is all that's between them and a nervous breakdown.

But a March vacation, now—*that* takes a real individualist, a true *bon vivant*, the sort of connoisseur of good living who knows when to chill a wine and how to appreciate a really fine cigar; he is the kind of man who can give you a fair approximation of the racial background of a beautiful Hawaiian Eurasian just by studying her legs.

For this perceptive client, we have three Esquire recommendations for vacations this month—three places where he can lie on his back, soak up the sun, gaze at blue skies, and come upon the realization that Thoreau had a sound philosophy but a faulty sense of geography (at least for those in-between days dividing winter and spring).

Ever lean back in your chair on a blowy winter evening, stretch out your legs, and dream about buying an island someplace where it's always warm and sunny—if you only had a few million dollars?

Well, that's what a Swedish gentleman did a few years ago—a fellow by the name of Axel Wenner-Gren. Only Mr. W-G has more millions than a few. With the whole world to choose from, he bought a place on a piece of land called, by some unpoetic soul, Hog Island, across the harbor from Nassau, in the Bahamas.

Our Scandinavian friend hired himself a covey of bulldozers and dredgers and set out to convert his part of the island into a sort of Venice on the Gulf Stream, until interrupted by the most recent World War. Now, though, Mr. Wenner-Gren is back again on his island Shangri-La—which, incidentally, is just what he calls his home on the island.

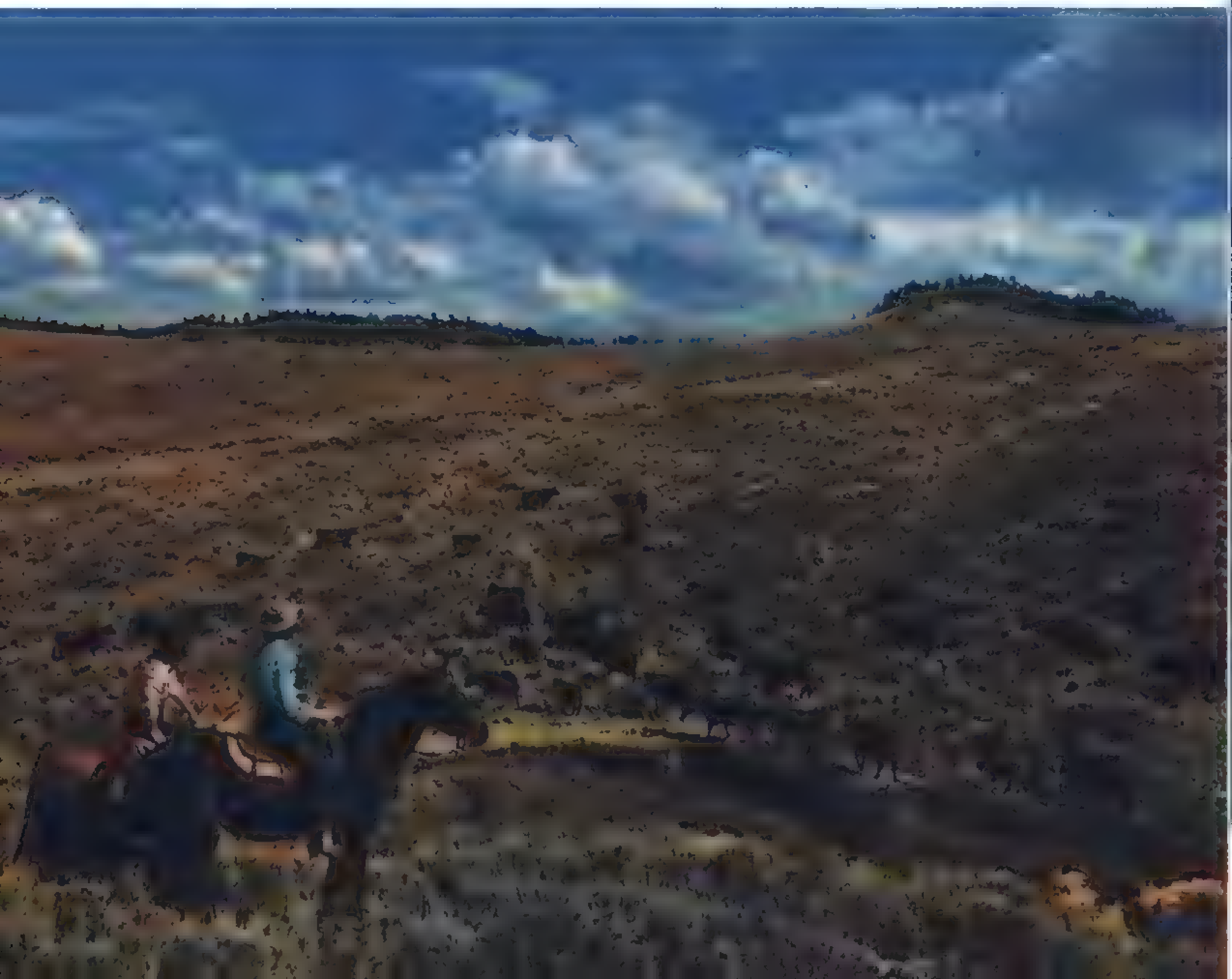
And there's no reason why you shouldn't join Mr. Wenner-Gren for your March vacation—just as long as you keep off the part he's reserved for himself. The rest of the island, including world-famous Paradise Beach, is yours for the visiting.

Nassau is the sort of place where you sit in a glass-bottomed boat and watch the fish sneer at you as you go by. Anybody who rides around in that sort of water without a fishing pole in his hand must, the fish figure, be afraid of them.

The Bahamas, with Nassau as their capital, are one of the world's foremost fishing areas. Drop a line over the side, or just lean out and thumb your nose over the water, and you'll get a strike from anything from a bonefish to a tarpon. Bimini island, within fifty miles of the Florida coast, is probably the best-known Bahamian fishing resort, but there are just about as many favorite fishing grounds throughout the 780-mile stretch of islands as there are anglers.

Fishing's fine in Nassau for the really energetic types—and so are the golf, tennis, and duck and pigeon shooting—but your really knowing vacationist in Nassau will climb into swim shorts, stagger out onto the beach, and collapse on the sand. The surf temperature, even (*Continued on page 123*)

Six-guns no longer blaze, but the Western spaces are still wide-open—and are mighty purdy, too



It's only three hours by plane from New York to Bermudian beaches and fine hotels like The Reefs

Meet the table-tennis champion, Dick Miles, who likes Irish literature and knows how to use plenty of english on a ball

Man on the Ball

A Sports Article by

BRUCE BLIVEN, JR.

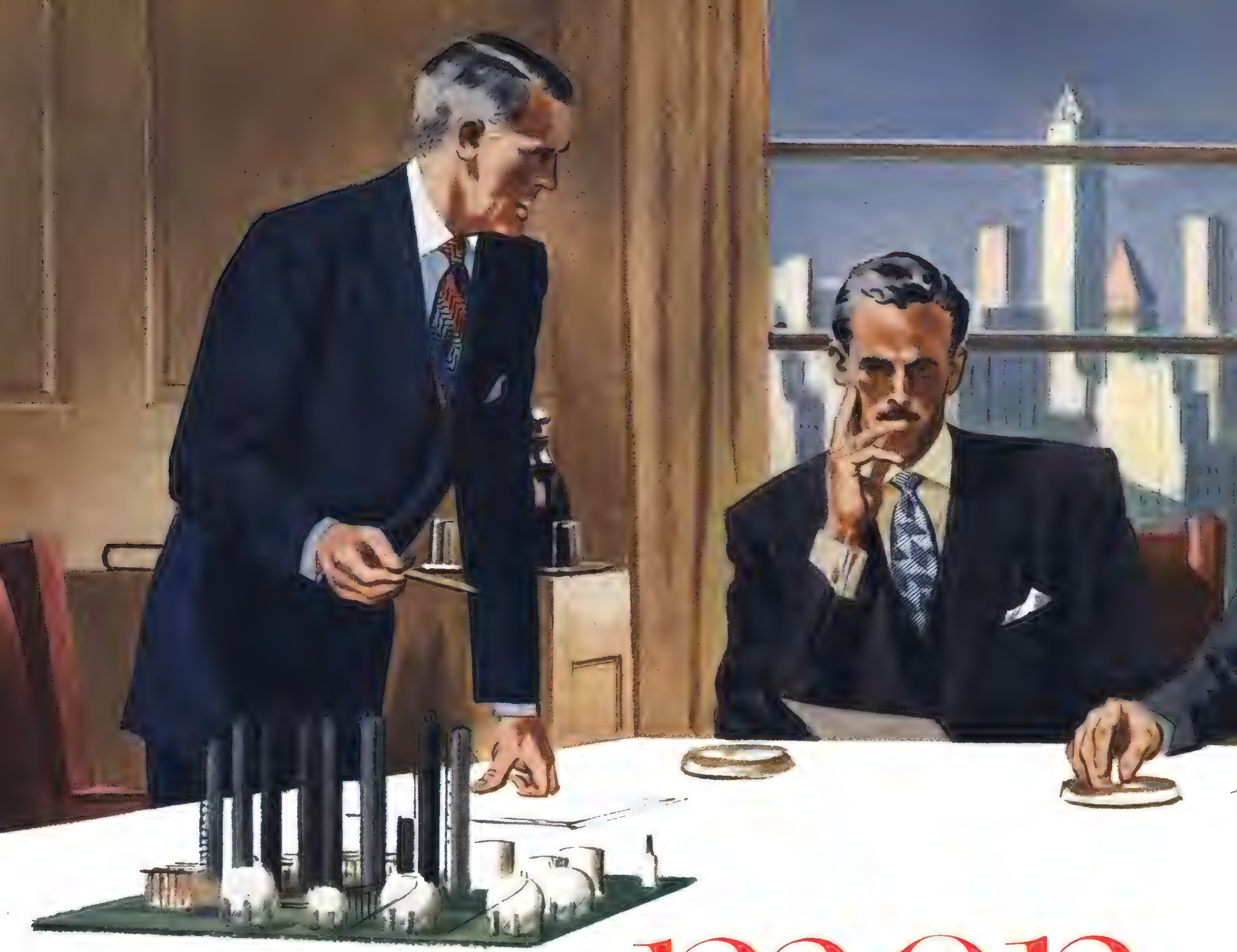
PHOTOGRAPHS BY NUKY

THERE are millions of table-tennis tables in the United States, and each of them comes equipped with its own champion—the guy, or sometimes the girl, who regularly whips all comers. Taken as a group, table-tennis enthusiasts are a happy and agile (if slightly breathless) band. Their cheeks are pink. Their eyes sparkle with the excitement of victory. They are confident and alert.

It's just as well, though, that most of them have no idea what really good table tennis is like; and it's fortunate, in particular, that almost none of them has ever played against a young man named Dick Miles. Miles is the United States men's singles table-tennis champion and, without serious doubt, the best player that this country has ever developed. He has a way of discouraging those who do battle against him.

The gap between championship table tennis and the common, or basement game-room, variety is just as wide as the difference between lawn tennis as Riggs and Kramer play it and an ordinary Sunday afternoon of sociable mixed doubles. But while the average tennis player knows quite well how far his skill falls short of championship calibre, the average table-tennis player lives in contented ignorance. "Most of them don't even know how the game is supposed to look," Miles explains. "It's pretty funny that with so many Americans playing table tennis, they're all so unsophisticated about the game."

Quite a number of the lawn-tennis stars fancy themselves good table-tennis players, perhaps because they think of it as a funny midget version of their big specialty. Recently, one of them who is famous for his cockiness on and off the court dropped in at the Broadway Table Tennis Courts, where Miles generally plays and practices. The tennis champ (*Continued on page 129*)



men

The biggest men in the U. S. outlined this fashion plan

Memorandum to: All top executives

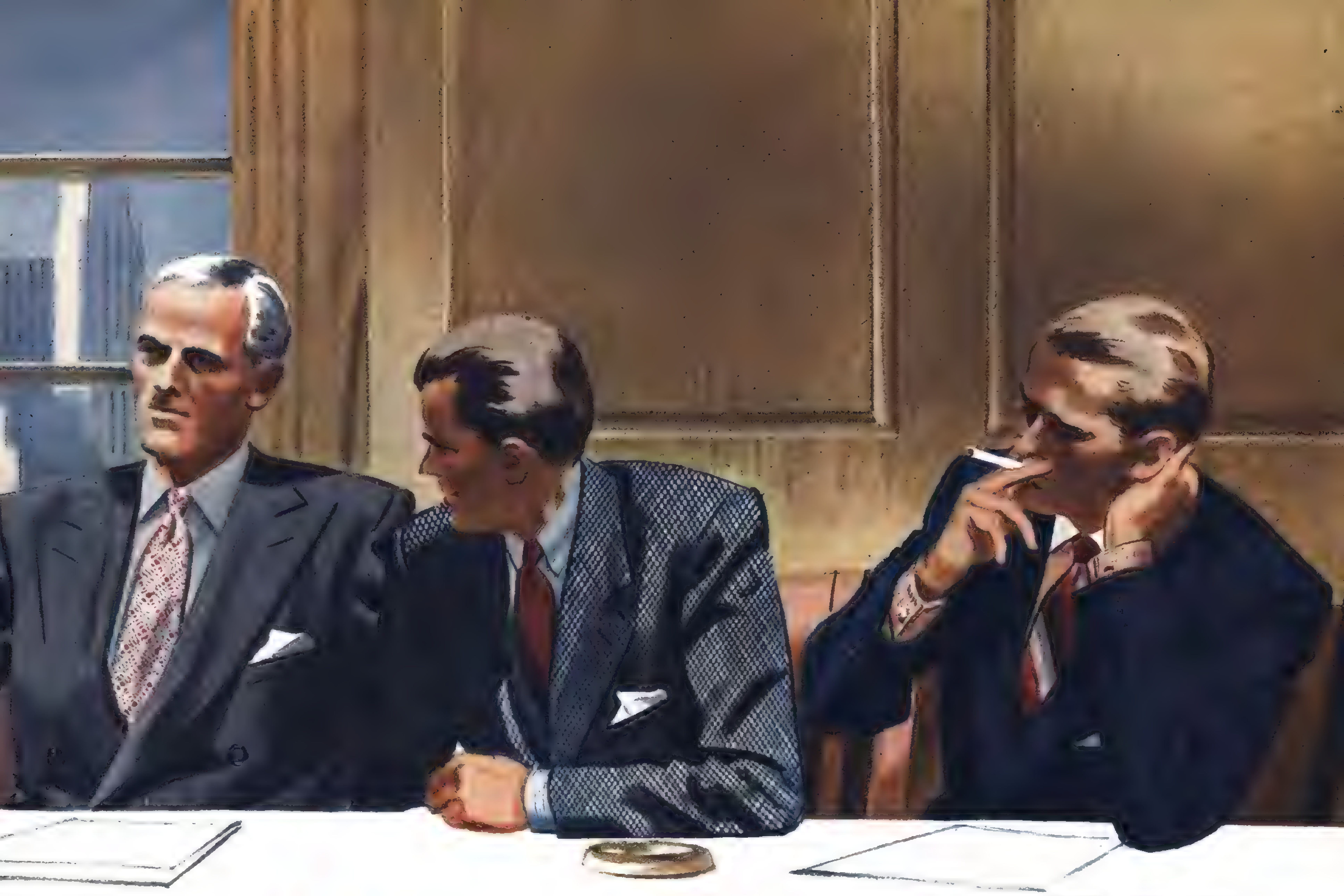
Subject: Your appearance, 1949 blueprint of

Reference: Your present wardrobe, possible replenishing of

Classification: AA priority, general

You, sir, whatever your business is, have a Big Day ahead of you. It may be every day, that Big Day, with you. Or the nature of your business may bring the Big Day around only once in a while — a critical interview, a meeting of the Board, a stop-in at the White House, a class dinner to meet your new college president, a trip to Europe or Eureka, Kansas, to close a big deal. No matter: there are times in every man's life, daily or less frequently, when he wants the Best, and nothing less will do. This entire portfolio contains top data on the subject, based upon the personal apparel demands of the leading executives in the U. S., blue-printed for immediate decision and action. Your copy is attached.

Straight from the Come-up File: You see these American Men of Affairs everywhere you look, including your own mirror. In the Club Car on the Twentieth Century. Boarding the Clipper. Stepping out of a cab in front of a Wall Street address known around the globe. Catching the Congressional Limited. Meeting in a panelled board room fifty stories above Manhattan. Relaxing over a cocktail at the Ritz, the Recess Club, the Racquet Club, the Bel-Air, the Bohemian Club and a dozen other spots where a white Martini or a dry Old Fashioned smooth business into the blend of creative venture and far-flung cooperation that American men have turned into a science and even a hobby. These Men of Affairs wear clothes of a sophisticated refinement and knowing good taste which is instantly recognizable, anywhere. They pay considerable attention to the coordination of accessories with their clothes, and at the same time create an impression of being oblivious to latest fashions. This report, compiled with the cooperation of the world's most exclusive custom purveyors for gentlemen reflects what Men of Affairs will be wearing on every big date on the calendar—*your* own desk calendar included.

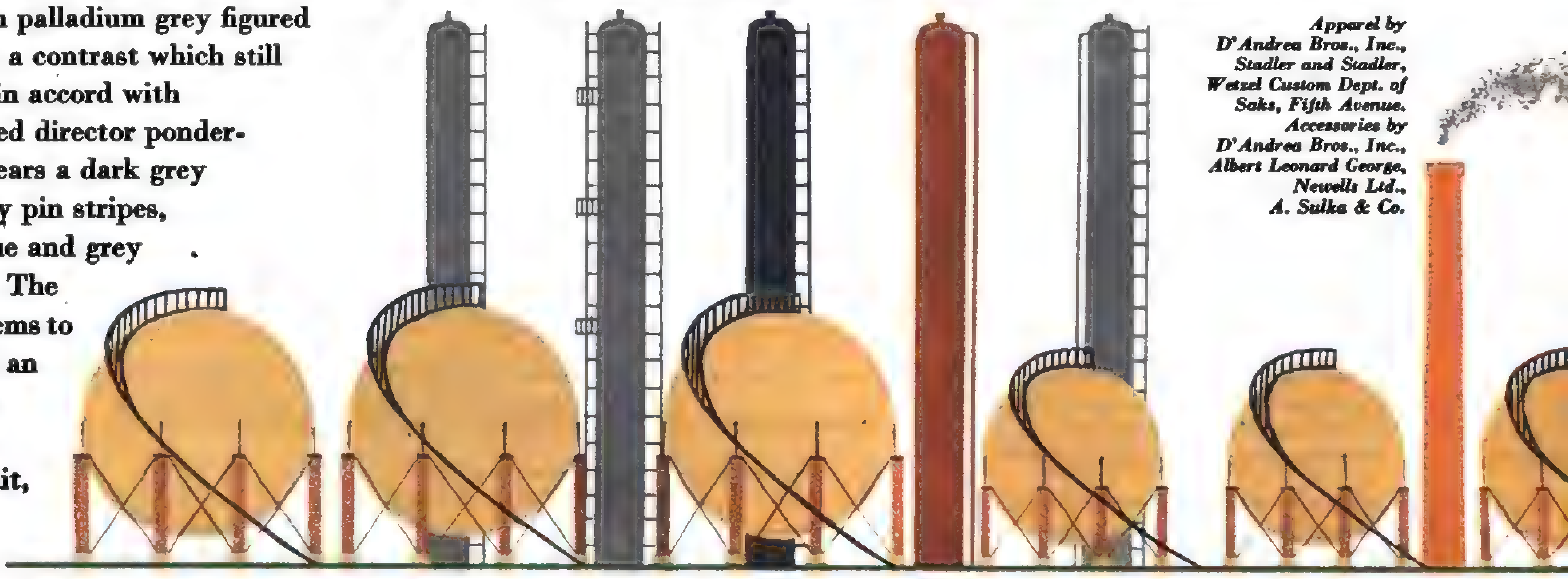


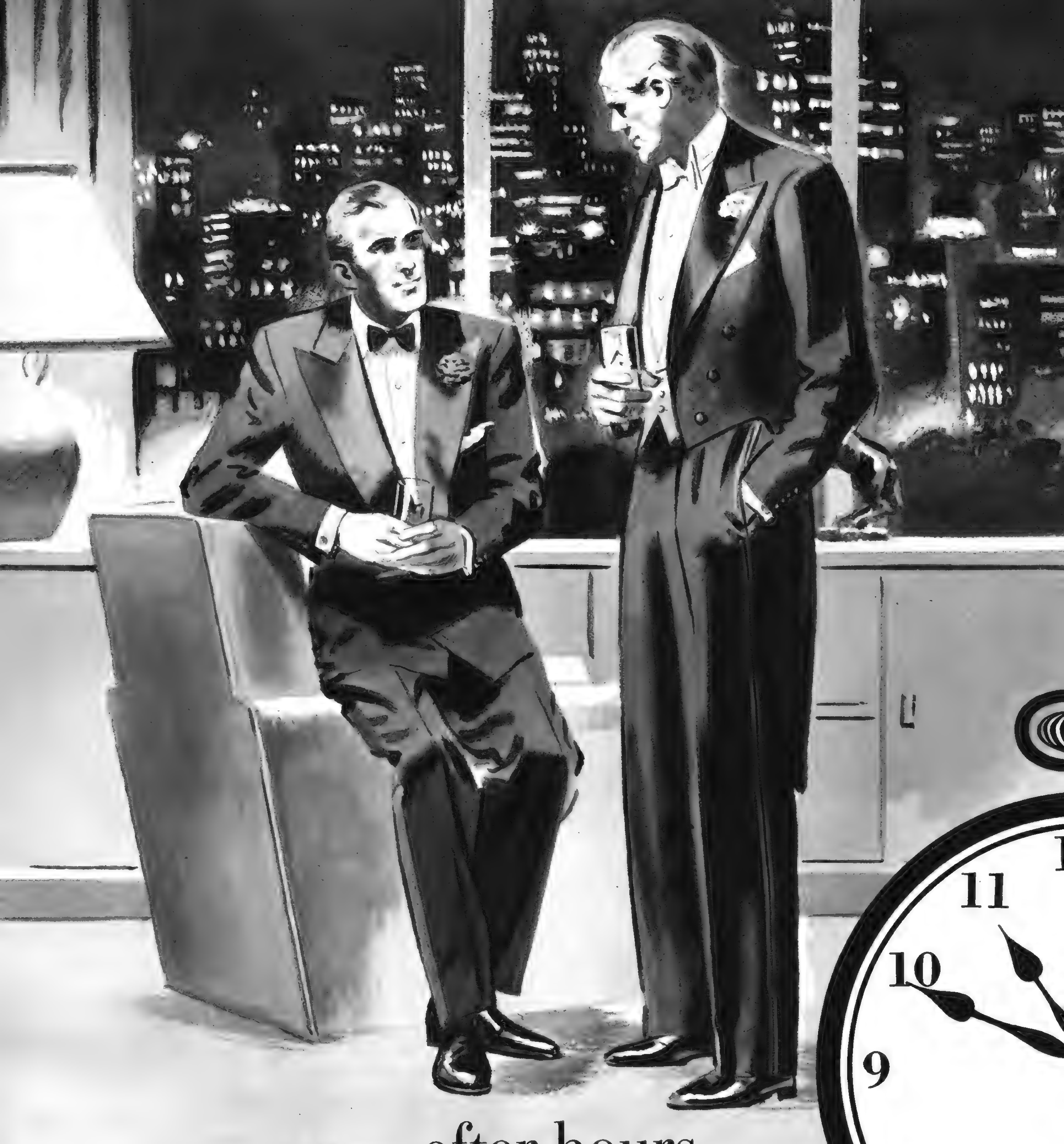
DRAWING BY MARTIN BURNISTON

# of affairs

Jottings: The Chairman of the Board of Directors is wearing the deep blue mill finished worsted suit, blue English broadcloth shirt with separate white starched collar, red and blue herringbone tie. His first associate tunes up the dark tones of his rather formal business clothes with palladium grey figured tie and Ecorn colored shirt, a contrast which still is essentially conservative, in accord with the occasion. The grey-haired director pondering the Chairman's plan, wears a dark grey worsted suit with silver grey pin stripes, white shirt and collar; a blue and grey silk tie in geometric design. The member next to him (who seems to be waiting for the flicker of an eyelash which may indicate how the idea is taking) has a grey sharkskin worsted suit, blue and white pin striped broadcloth shirt with a tab collar and a solid color maroon silk tie. The fifth man (and we'd say he's the dark horse of the lot on the voting) wears a very deep blue worsted suit with pale cluster stripes, red and grey tie and white shirt. "Your reactions, gentlemen, please."

Apparel by
D'Andrea Bros., Inc.,
Stadler and Stadler,
Wetzel Custom Dept. of
Saks, Fifth Avenue.
Accessories by
D'Andrea Bros., Inc.,
Albert Leonard George,
Newells Ltd.,
A. Sulka & Co.

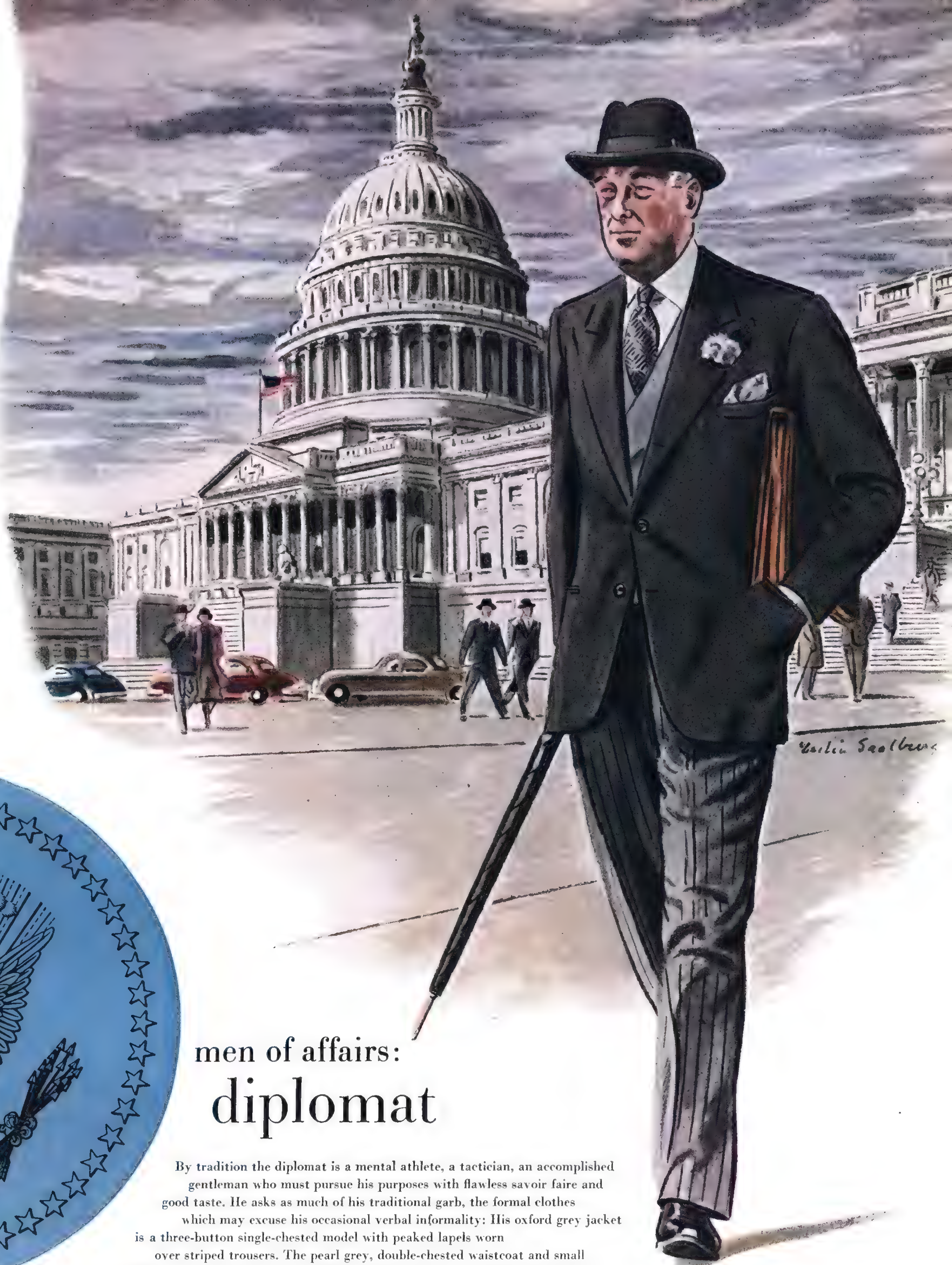




men of affairs: after hours

Men who with a word can purchase a fleet of ships or scrap a million dollar plan prefer their evening clothes conservatively perfect—the talk goes better when a jacket, like an idea, fits so perfectly the demands of the moment, that the details are fused in an effect of unity. Barely visible (but you can see them if you look closely) are: the double-chested dinner jacket, in midnight blue, with formal satin lapel facings. The bow tie with greater flare on its lower edge is keyed to the same satin fabric, the pique dress shirt has bold pleats and the gold studs and links are simple concave disks. The tailcoat, also midnight blue in a sheer worsted, has satin lapel facings and an air of comfortable, but correct, elegance. Clothes by Twyeffort, N. Y.

DRAWING BY MARTIN BURNISTON

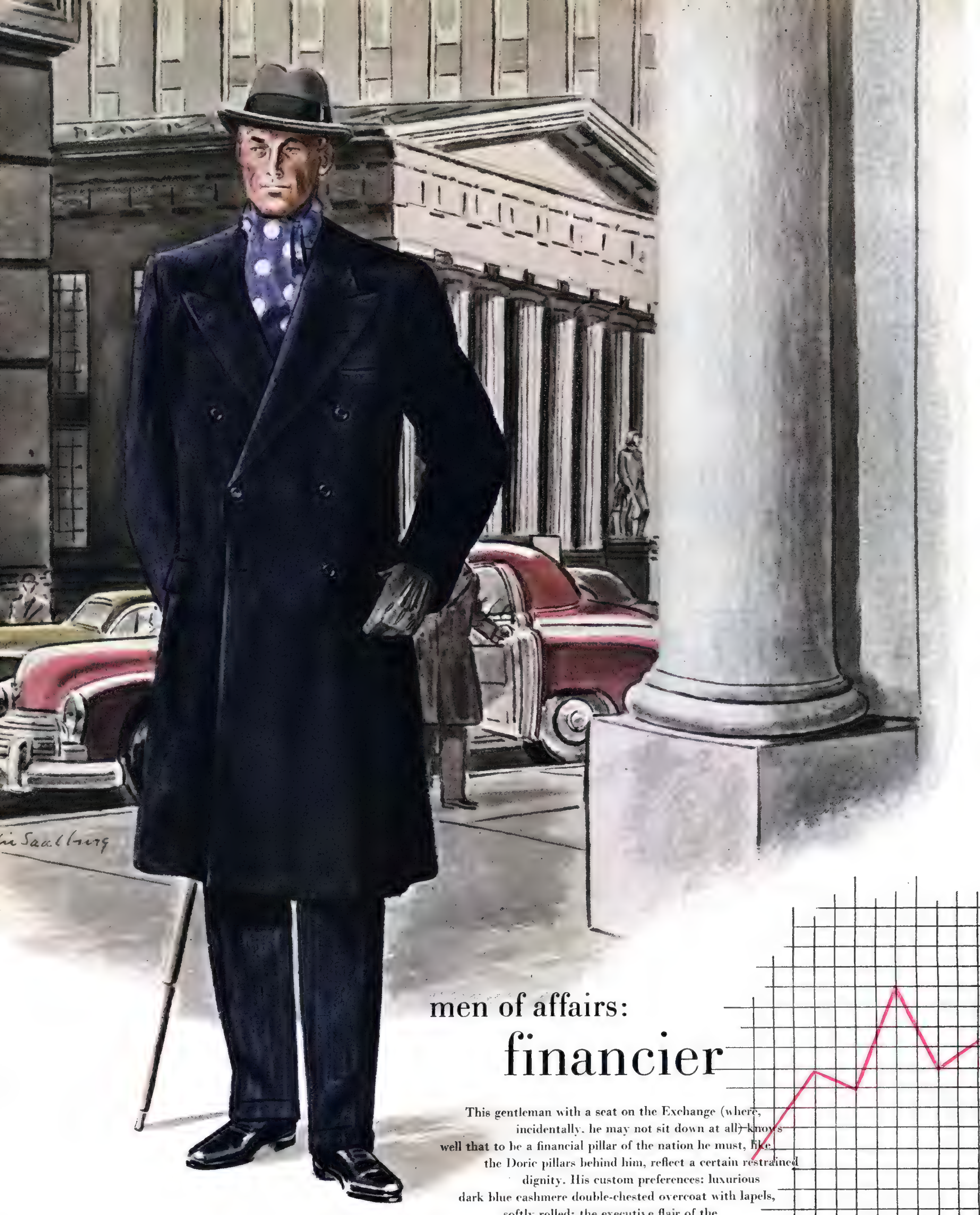


men of affairs:

diplomat

By tradition the diplomat is a mental athlete, a tactician, an accomplished gentleman who must pursue his purposes with flawless savoir faire and good taste. He asks as much of his traditional garb, the formal clothes which may excuse his occasional verbal informality: His oxford grey jacket is a three-button single-chested model with peaked lapels worn over striped trousers. The pearl grey, double-chested waistcoat and small patterned tie are distinguished touches. The black homburg is the accepted headpiece. Grey mocha gloves and black shoes are *de rigueur*, as they say at the Embassy, in between sips of the champagne and munches on the caviar. Clothes by Dunhill Tailored Clothes, New York.

DRAWING BY LESLIE SAALBURG

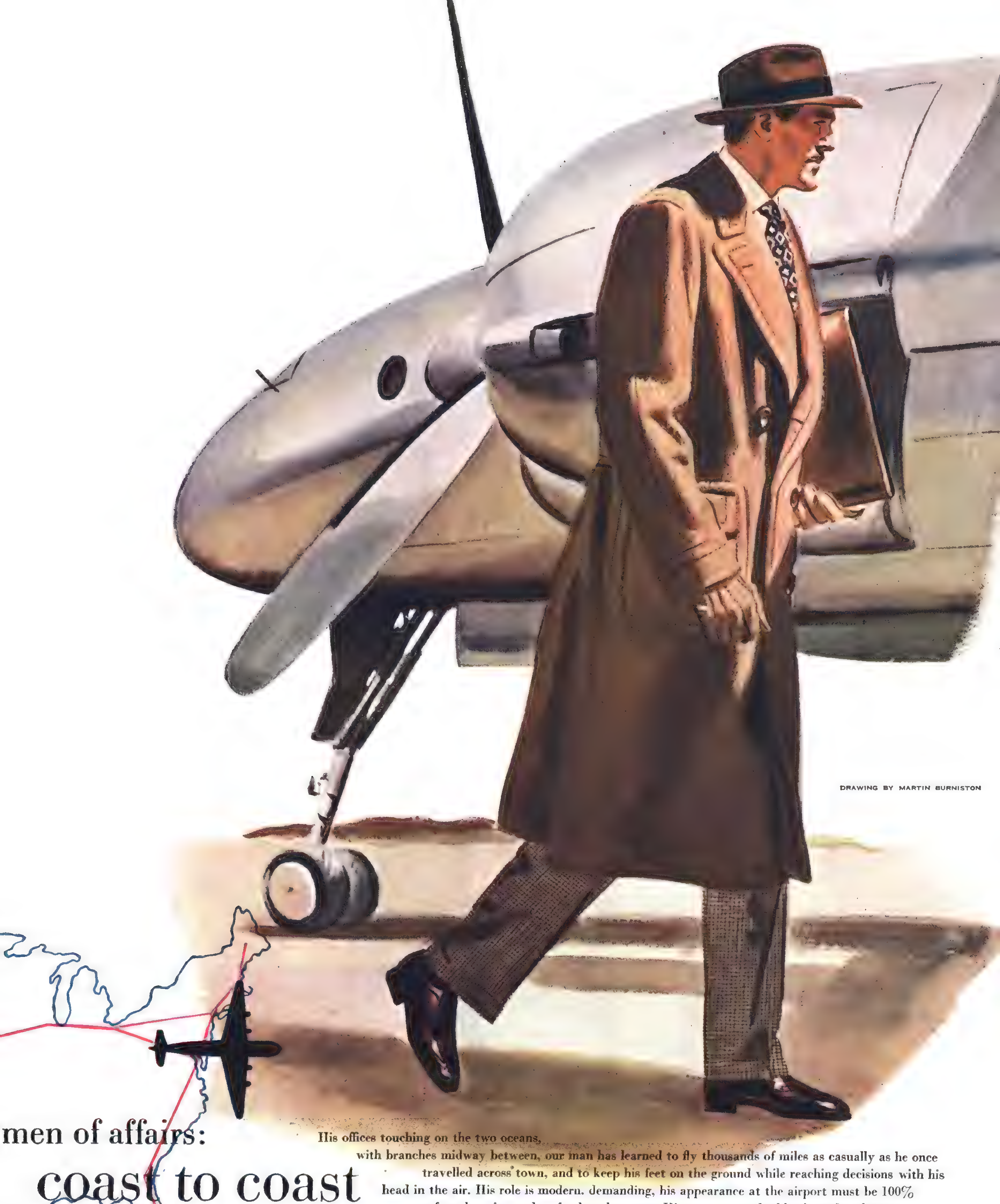


men of affairs:

financier

This gentleman with a seat on the Exchange (where, incidentally, he may not sit down at all) knows well that to be a financial pillar of the nation he must, like the Doric pillars behind him, reflect a certain restrained dignity. His custom preferences: luxurious dark blue cashmere double-chested overcoat with lapels, softly rolled; the executive flair of the homburg, silk foulard imported muffler, mocha gloves, striped blue flannel suit, black calf shoes. Overcoat by Bastable Co., New York.

DRAWING BY LESLIE SAALBURG



DRAWING BY MARTIN BURNISTON

men of affairs:
coast to coast

His offices touching on the two oceans, with branches midway between, our man has learned to fly thousands of miles as casually as he once travelled across town, and to keep his feet on the ground while reaching decisions with his head in the air. His role is modern, demanding, his appearance at the airport must be 100% perfect the minute they feather the props. His own props: double-chested cashmere coat cut along easy lines, its bold look brought out by the hand stitching set back 5/8″ from the edges, considered by many men to be essential for transcontinental travel. With it, a fine-checked angola suit, tan broadcloth shirt and hand blocked foulard tie. The hand-sewn pigskin gloves are soft and rugged type, specially indicated for travel. His hat is handkerchief felt of course: and as the hostess on the plane watches him, maybe, she sighs. Coat and suit from Gray and Lampel, Inc., New York.

men of affairs:

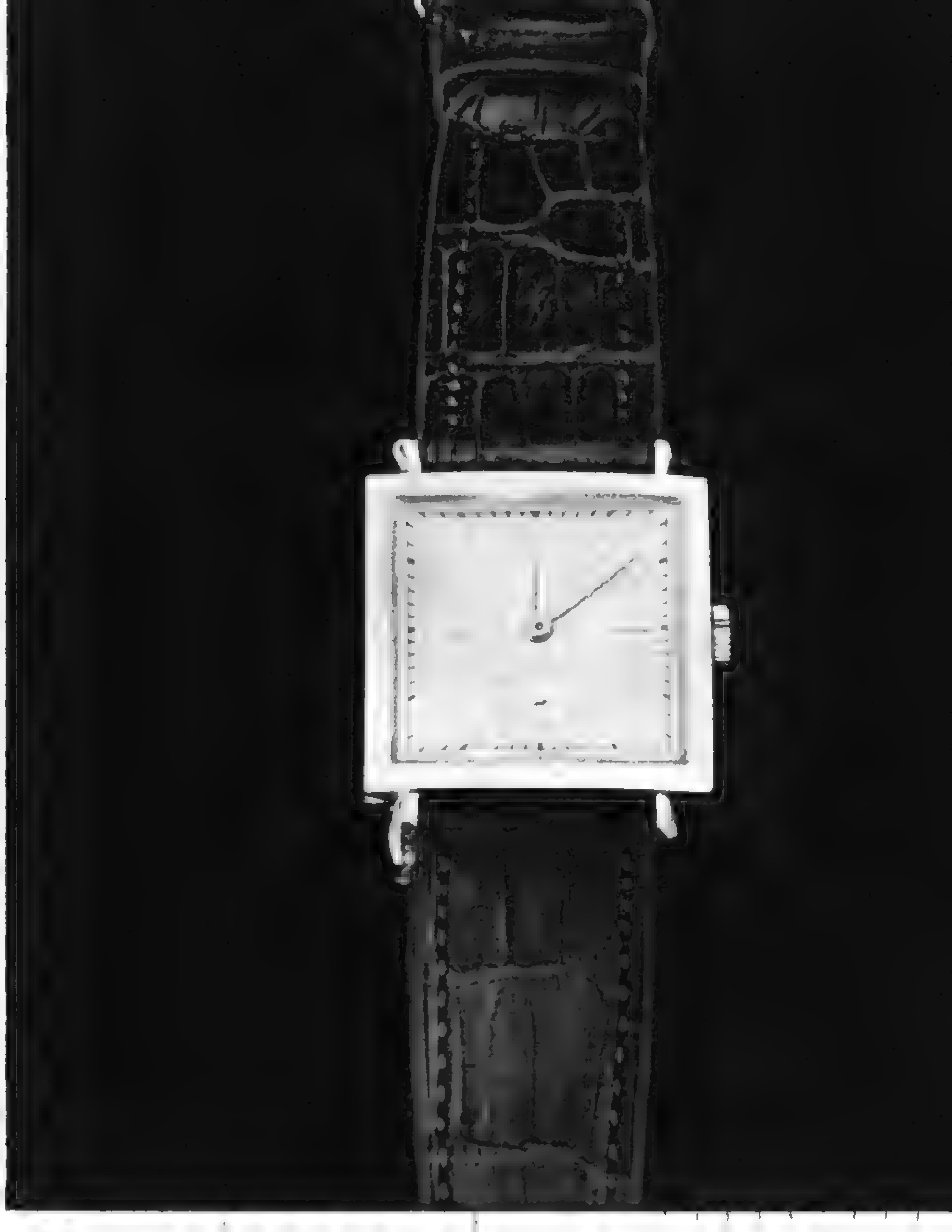
White pleated bosom shirt with blue balloon cloth body, or with fine checked bosom design, is strictly top management style, the ties in appropriate taste. Shirts, respectively, by Newell's, Ltd., N. Y., and Budd Ltd., N. Y.

The woven silk tie (center) plays diagonals against small checks; the diagonal weave (left) is gold set off by silver: Sulka, N. Y. The foulard pattern (right) is grey and brown: Bronzini, Ltd., N. Y.

The attaché case—almost a must—is of cowhide with red leather lining, accommodates papers and a change of linen. Fittings of brass.

Richly coordinated jewelry:
gold-ridged cigarette case, lighter,
cufflinks, tie holder, key chain and gold studded wallet. Cartier, N. Y.

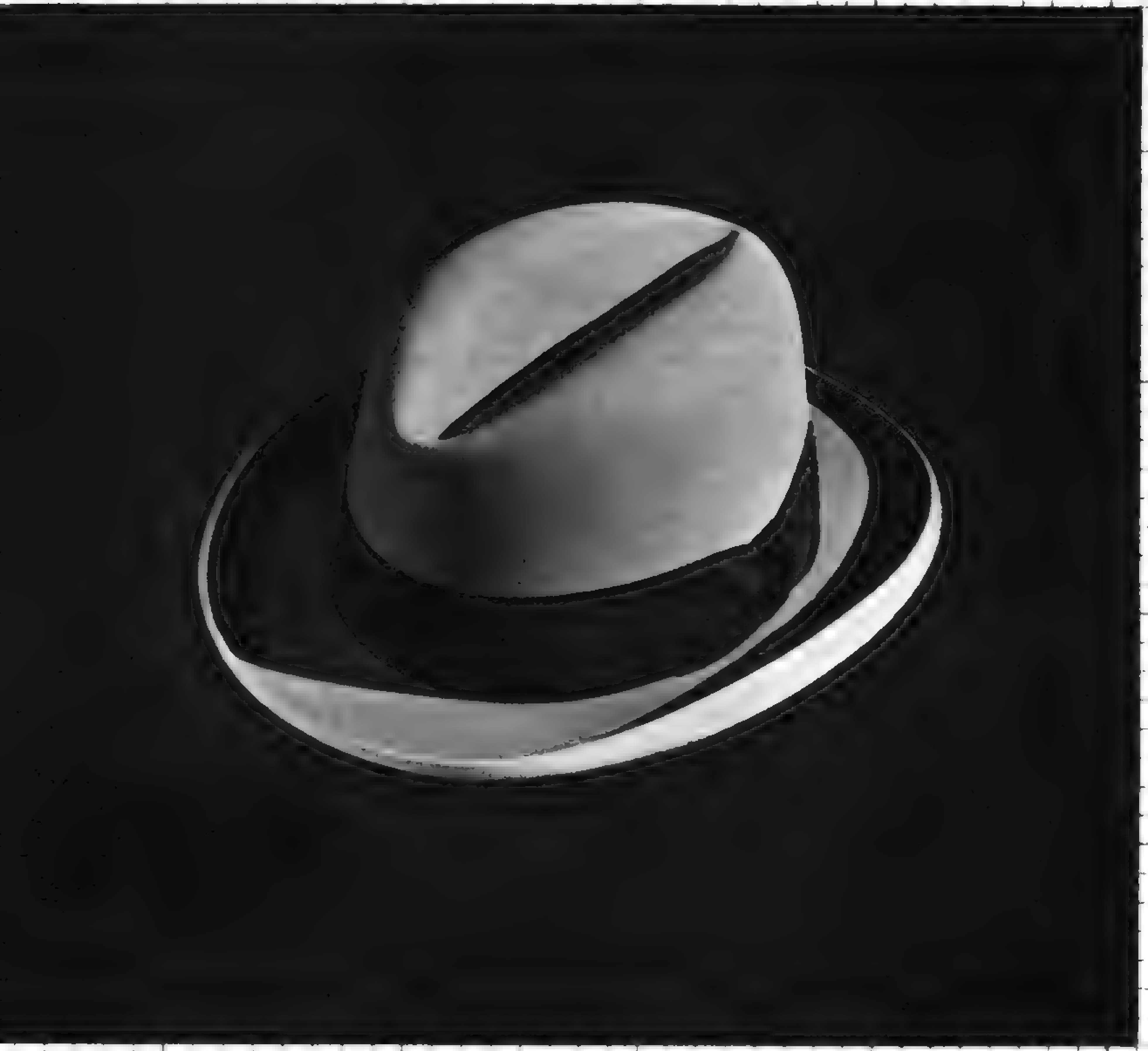
in conference



Strictly business: No need to emphasize the importance of his appearance to the successful business man—he proves his appreciation of that fact every time a president addresses his organization, a chairman runs a meeting, or a sales manager outlines a campaign. The men and their words may vary, but the axiom never does: top executives show at their best every possible minute. In conference, here, some of the executive's favorite custom accessories:

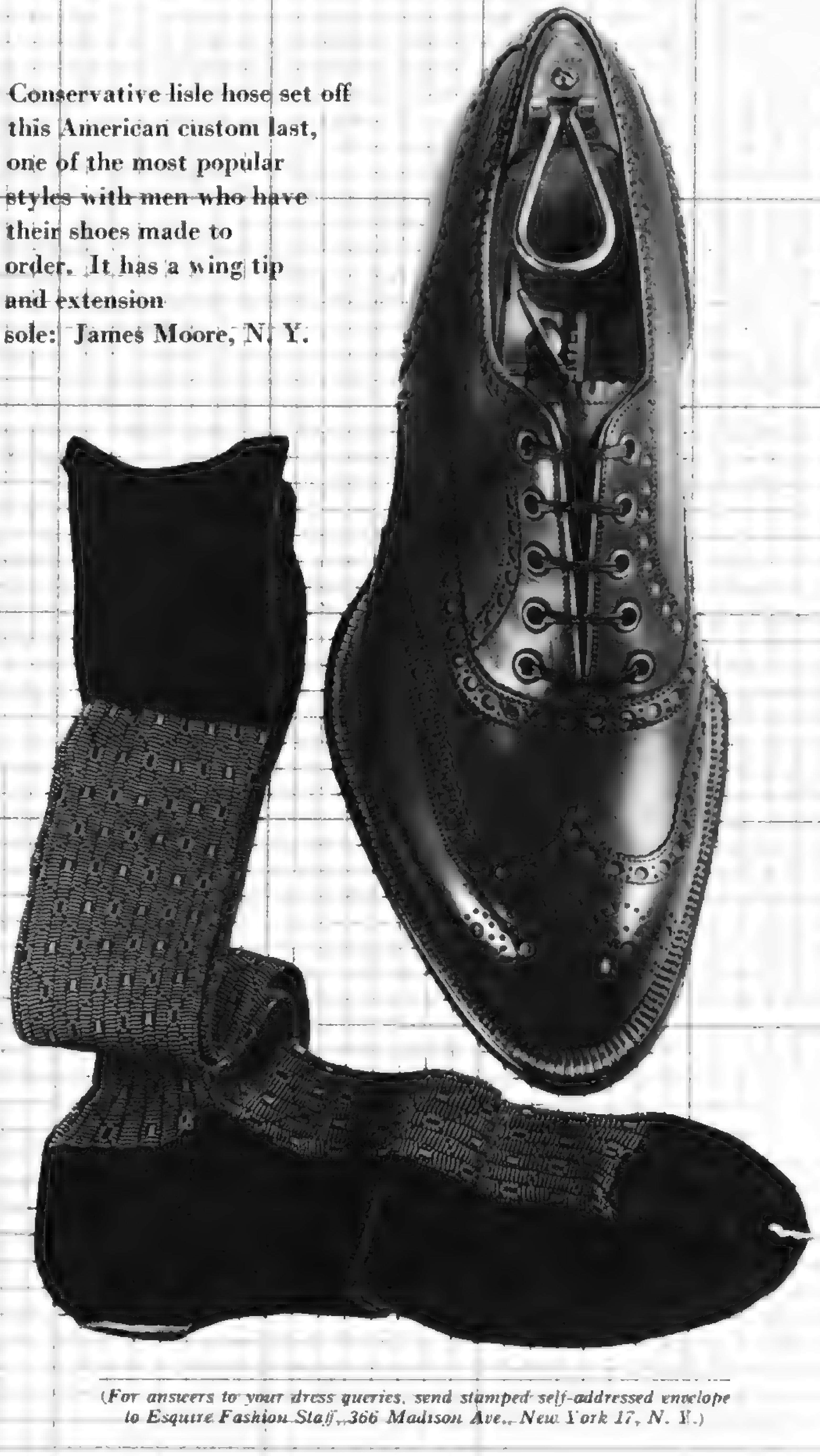
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MANUEL DE AGUSTIN

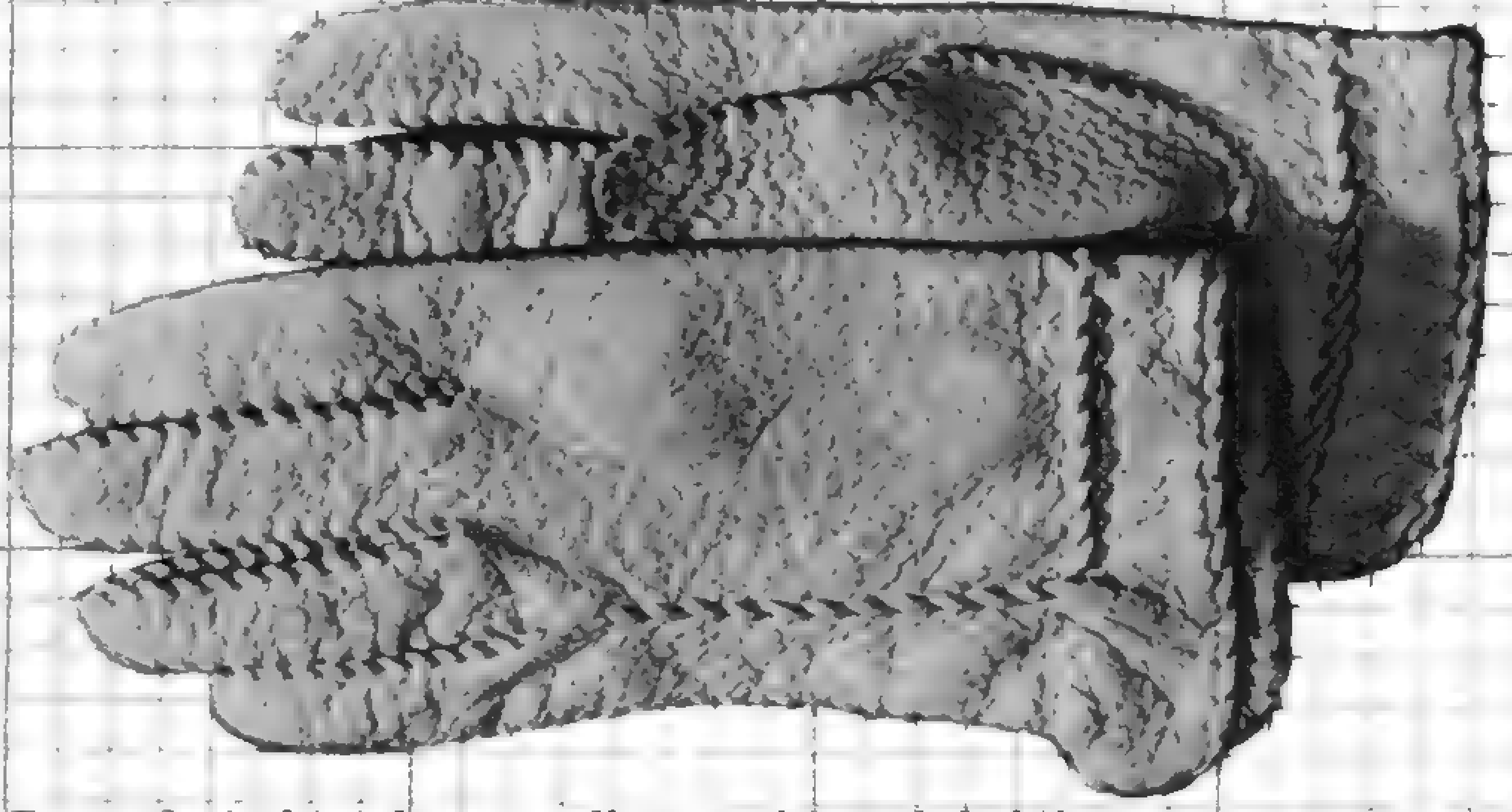
His watch is simple and masculine in design; the handsome alligator strap is a correct accessory: Trabert and Hoeffer, N. Y.



The grey homburg hat with black band, and a lighter grey binding strike the executive note of formality for business wear.

Conservative lisle hose set off this American custom last, one of the most popular styles with men who have their shoes made to order. It has a wing tip and extension sole: James Moore, N. Y.





Rugged pigskin gloves, pull-on style, with boldly raised decorations at cuff and top: Bronzini, Ltd., N. Y.

(For answers to your dress queries, send stamped self-addressed envelope to Esquire Fashion Staff, 366 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.)

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT MOORE

Shoot Little Chicken

Seems Maybird was hankering for to marry up with old Bethel Scott, a big rooster man from the State of Georgia. But Paw and fat old one-eye Randolph sure fixed up that one good

A Story by WILLIAM FULLER

Paw and me came into the house. We saw Maybird—Maybird's my sister, and she's pushing eighteen—setting on the sofa. There was a strange man beside her.

We pulled up short.

Maybird smiled at the man beside her. Her cheeks flushed red. Her eyes shone soft. Paw groaned. I groaned, too. Paw and me, we knew the signs. Old Maybird was in love again.

Maybird and the strange man stood up. "Paw," she said. "Virgil," she said. "I'll make you acquainted with Bethel Scott."

Paw took the stove match from between his teeth. He shoved his old black felt further back on his head. He hitched his belt up over his little round paunch. I reckon he figured to make the best of it. "Howdy. son," he said.

The man's voice was don't-care. "How you making it?"

I didn't say a thing.

Paw said, "Be mannerable, Virgil."

"What say?" I grunted at the man.

Maybird glared at me.

I took a good look at what Maybird had brought home with her this time. Old Bethel was tall and he was slim. His hair was combed down slick. His sideburns grew half the length of his cheek. His blue serge trousers were topped by a bright brown shirt. A mighty sharp-looking feller, that Bethel.

"Set down, now do," Paw said to Bethel.

Bethel turned to set on the sofa by Maybird, and Paw and me saw the back of his shirt. A big, purple picture of a gamecock stretched from belt to shoulders of the back of that shirt. "Dadburn," Paw said, "that sure is quite some of a shirt. I've seen many a fancy shirt in my day, Bethel, but I never did see a shirt to beat that one. Where'd you get that shirt at, Bethel?"

"Special made," Bethel said.

"I reckon that special-made shirt there cost you a grist of money, didn't she, Bethel?"

"Thirty-five dollars."

Paw whistled through his teeth.

"Bethel's a gamecock man," Maybird said. "He's a big rooster man from the State of Georgia." She looked at old Bethel. She sighed. I got to say it, my sister Maybird's a mighty pretty girl. Her hair is dark and wavy. Her face seems mostly eyes. She's shaped up soft and slim. When Maybird gets that love look on her face, which is right often, you can't outmuch her, for pretty, in the section. I sure did hate to see her wasting that look on a dadburned sharp-looking rooster man from the State of Georgia.

"Say he is!" Paw said. "Why, it's a real pleasure for me to be meeting a real cocker. You have come to the right place, son," he said. "I'm sure you've heard the name of Lonnie Ramsey in Georgia gamecock circles."

"Can't say that I have."

Paw paid him no mind. "Used to call me 'Sporting Life' back in the old days. A man wanted a bet on a chicken fight, well, he didn't have to go no further than Sporting Life Ramsey. Why, I can remember . . ."

"Oh, Paw . . ." Maybird said.

"You shush," I told Maybird.

"I raised them and I fought them; pit my own birds. Clean-swept three fifteen-entry, four-cock derbies in a row up in Alachua County."

Bethel grinned at Paw. I sure didn't like the looks of that grin. That grin was a little old crooked, thin, sly, mean sort of a grin. I could tell from that grin he didn't believe a word Paw was saying. I didn't neither, but that was different.

"Well, now, Sporting Life, that's a mighty good thing for me to know. I'm proud I met you. I might be able to use a man like you around the place, if you're ever of a mind to get back into the gamecock business."

Bethel glanced at Maybird. Maybird was just setting there on the sofa looking at him like he was the finest thing that ever come out of the brush. "I got a mighty big place, you know," he went on. "I reckon I got the biggest chicken farm in South Georgia. I'm a man that don't fool around with no halfway measures. I keep around two hundred of the finest fighting cocks that money can buy—Roundheads, Travelers, Warhorses, Yankee Clippers. I see a rooster strikes my fancy, well then, I got to have him, I don't care for the cost. I keep three or four old-time cockers around the place to help me train them. A man works for Bethel Scott, he's well taken care of—if I do say it. You ever interested in a job of work, why, let me know."

I could see it puckered Paw to be offered a job of work by a man half his age. I could see he didn't like it none too well to have a man come in and big talk him, right in his own setting room, the way old Bethel was doing. "I reckon I won't be taking you up on that proposition of a job of work, son," he said. "I'm figuring on getting back into the gamecock business on my own hook. I got the finest, airiest gamecock in the section—a Pure Law Grey—out in my back yard right now. I'm figuring on laying in some more high-class pit stock come fall."

It like to made me sick when I thought what a man would say when he got to bragging. I know my Paw is the smartest man in our section, but I sure couldn't see no object in him bragging like that. The only cockfighting he'd ever done, to my knowing, was with old Randolph, that "finest gamecock in the section" he was mouthing about.

I won't say that old Randolph hadn't been a mighty fine gamecock in his day, but old Randolph's day was done. Paw had traded off an old crankcase he'd been saving about the place to Rance Odell for Randolph. This had been five, six years ago. Paw'd pitted Randolph six or eight times down to Chinaberry that first year he'd had him. Old Randolph had whipped every cock he'd met. He'd got so beat-up, though—blind in one eye, tattered and tore—that Paw had retired him.

Now old Randolph was old and fat. He was pushing seven-and-one-half pounds. But Paw still loved him dearly. Maw had claimed a dozen times she was sick of the old fool and was fixing to broil him for Sunday dinner, but Paw wouldn't let her. Paw said Randolph was to have the run of the place for as long as he lived.

I saw Bethel slip a catercornerwise wink at Maybird. "Well, now, I'll tell you what, Sporting Life," he said. "I come down here from the State of Georgia to look around amongst the local fighting-cock circles. I'm a man that keeps one eye open at all times when it comes to roosters, or—" I saw him grab holt of Maybird's hand there beside him on the sofa "—a pretty girl. I'll trade roosters or I'll fight them. It don't make doodly squat *which* to Bethel Scott."

Paw was getting madder. I hacked my brain trying to figure a way of getting him out of there before he talked hisself into some trouble. "Paw," I said, "it's time to feed the stock."

"Shush, boy," Paw said. "Can't you see that me and Bethel Scott, here, are on the ledge of working up a little business venture?"

"What say you and me go out and have a look at that fighting cock of yours, Sporting Life?" said Bethel.

Maybird laughed.

Paw's face reddened.

"It's milking time, Paw," I said.

"That fighting cock don't take to visitors," Paw said.

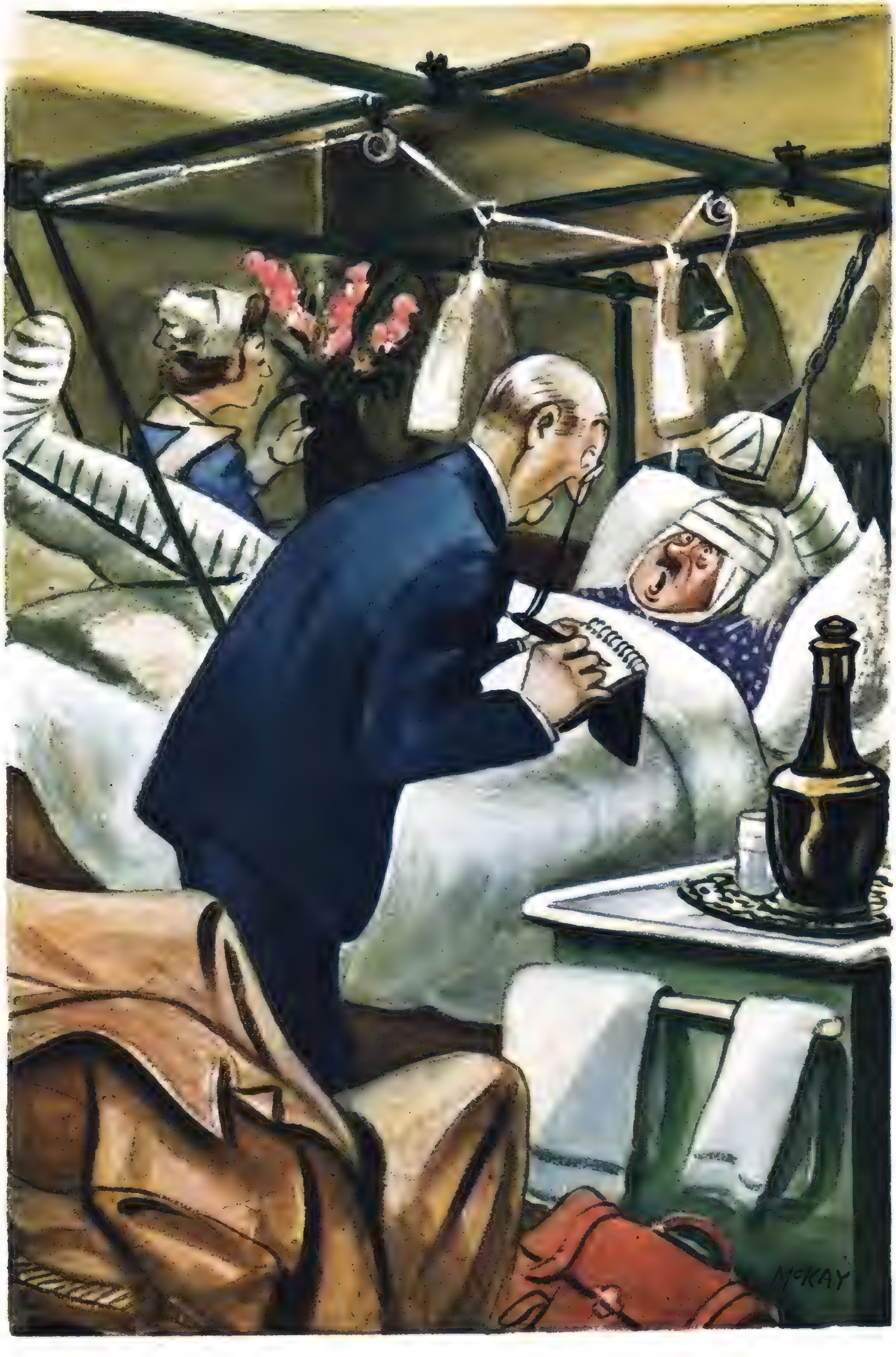
"I swear," Bethel said, "if I ever did hear of a cocker to be so touchy about a chicken. A man might think, Sporting Life, that you didn't *have* a gamecock about the place." He scrunched over closer to Maybird, bold as a dadburned crow.

Paw shouted, "You just to come on out in the yard!"

Oh, my, I thought—he's gone and done it again.

There wouldn't nothing do for Paw but what we all had to troop out into the back yard. "Randolph!" Paw shouted.

Most all the chickens—Maw kept eighteen or twenty—were clucking about the back stoop, pecking (*Continued on page 135*)



". . . and unto my wife I leave what is left of the car, her greatest joy —the back seat!"

You Don't Need Brains

Harry Ryder was a heel who left a dirty trail in his saunter through life. But one day his luck ran out, and Harry's past caught up with him with a big bang

A Story by

E. B. MARDEN

THERE were no lights in Connie's semibasement apartment. Harry Ryder, standing across the street, smiled to himself. He was in luck again.

The cigarette hanging from his lips had burned down. He flipped it away and lit another. Well, Connie wouldn't have to worry about his chain-smoking any more. She had been after him about it for years, though she knew it never did any good.

He took the key to her apartment out of his pocket and started to cross the street. There was his luck working for him again. If he hadn't forgotten to give the key back . . . If Connie had asked him for it . . .

Thinking about his luck gave Harry a nice, warm feeling. There was no doubt about it —he was one guy who really got the breaks. And that's what counted—the breaks. More than work, more than brains. Plenty of guys had brains and worked hard; but if they weren't lucky, it didn't mean a thing.

Take himself, for instance. Look at the way even his bad breaks had worked out. Like dislocating his knee his last year in college. That had seemed a tough break, since it came in the last few minutes of his last football game. Who could have guessed that five years later it would keep him out of the Army? And look what keeping out of the Army had meant to him.

Harry paused as he reached the opposite sidewalk. The cigarette hanging from his lips made a moving point of light as he looked up and down the street. There was nobody in sight. Those letters were as good as burned. He knew where Connie kept them.

Writing Connie that kind of stuff had been a fool move. Just because he had missed her badly when he was away on those selling trips . . . Sure, she had become a habit and he had been lonely away from her, but he should have had more sense. Well, he had made other fool moves and his over-all luck had more than made up for them.

There had been the time he took his first flier in the market, back in 1940. Everybody was talking about the war boom and what it would do for stocks. It was the straight dope all right—except that they hadn't figured on what would happen when the Germans really started slugging. That had knocked the bottom out of the market, and out of his savings, too. He had ended up fifteen hundred bucks in debt. But even on that deal, there had been a pay-off. If he hadn't got into the market, he wouldn't have met Connie Blake. And without Connie, no Bedford Textiles. And without Bedford Textiles—but those were the breaks!

It was too bad about Connie. The trouble with girls like Connie was that they could never get it into their heads that a man might become tired of them. Just because she hadn't changed, she thought he couldn't change either. Well, she'd found out.

After all, he had never promised to marry her. It was her fault if she took too much for granted. Sure, he had liked her. She was quite a girl. At least he had thought so when Jim Ferrist, the man he traded with on Wall Street, had introduced him to her.

She had been Jim's secretary. He remembered how he had suspected there must be something between Jim and her—a sweet-looking blonde like Connie and an operator like Jim. But there hadn't been anyone before himself. It was hard to believe, but it was true. She had been just a dumb, innocent blonde waiting for Mr. Right to come along—a sucker for a kind of movie dream complete with clean-cut guy, million bucks, and swank parties on penthouse terraces.

Well, it hadn't worked out quite like that. There had been Connie's semibasement apartment instead of a penthouse. There had been six or seven pretty good years, but there hadn't been any of this marriage business. Hell, he could have married Connie any time—but why be in a hurry? And had he been right—or had he been right? Look what had come through the door. Who could blame him for grabbing a girl like Elizabeth Steele? Even for a lucky guy, that was hitting the jack pot. Looks, brains, *and* money. Big money.

It couldn't have happened if Connie hadn't come through with that dope about Bedford Textiles. That was one sweet deal. There was Jim Ferrist quietly buying control of the company for a syndicate of the smartest money boys in New York, and there was Connie, right in the middle of it.

It was funny how he had never had any doubts about that deal. What had really sold him was the fact that the very same week he had got one of those under-the-counter bonuses they handed out during the war. Five thousand bucks—and he had put every nickel into Bedford Textiles. Six thousand shares at eighty-four cents a share—worth fifty-two bucks a share in today's market and paying two dollars a year dividends.

In the dark, Harry fumbled to find the lock. He bent his head to bring the light from his cigarette down. He'd have those letters in a minute now, and then he would be in the clear.

It had been quite a jolt when he remembered them suddenly, the day after he had broken the news about Elizabeth to Connie. If Elizabeth ever read those letters—or worse still, if that stuffed-shirt old man of hers ever read them . . .

He should have grabbed them yesterday. He must have been more nervous than he had realized, because he hadn't given them a thought. He had been keyed up for a big scene with Connie; and when there hadn't been any scene at all, it had kind of knocked him off his stride.

The way Connie had taken the news had sure been a surprise. She hadn't done a thing. She had just looked at him in a sort of puzzled way, not saying a word for at least a minute. Then she had turned away, and, very low, so that he could hardly hear, she had said, "All right, Harry." That was all. "All right, Harry."

He still couldn't figure it. He was shaking his head as he finally got the key in the lock and turned it. Maybe it was just his dumb, crazy luck working for him again.

His cigarette ignited the gas that filled the apartment and the blast killed him instantly. In a way, it's too bad he didn't live a bit longer; because he was the only one who could have told the police, who would have liked to know, just what was in all those letters Connie burned in the fireplace before she turned on the gas. ⌗

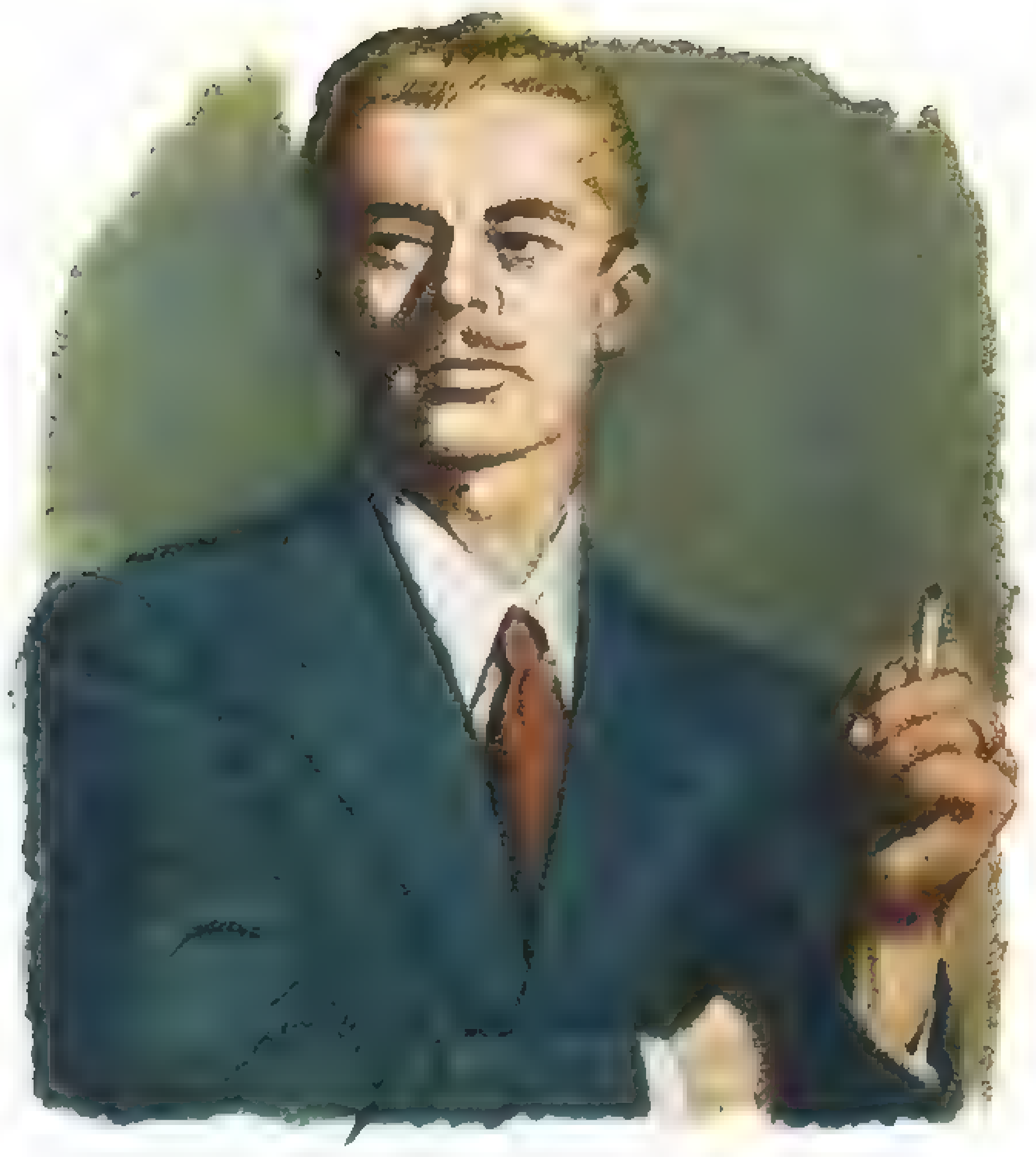
"On second thought, we could eat out tonight . . ."

Denver Gillen

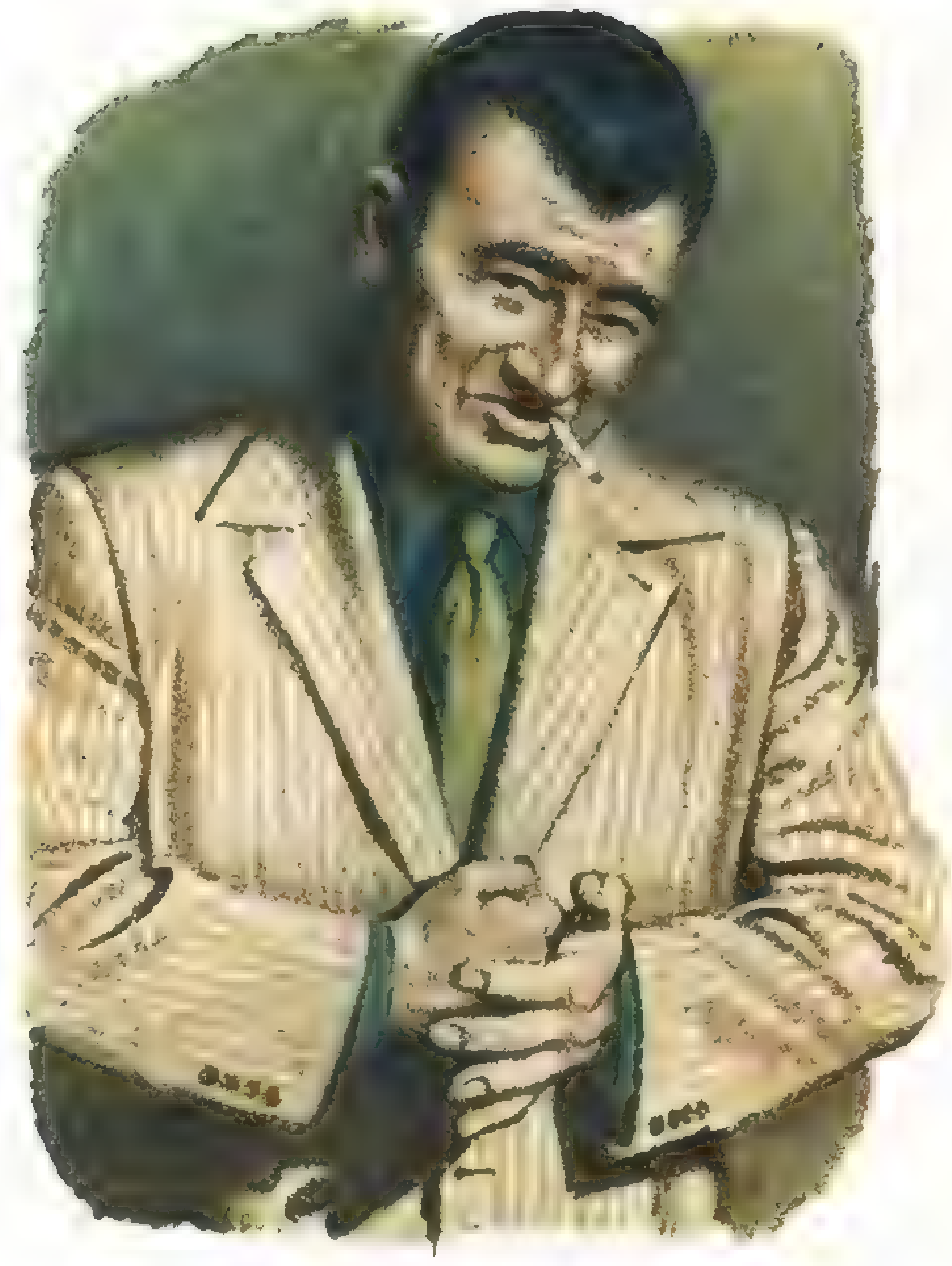
Lela had everything—including two extremely rough little playmates

The Case of Lela Cade

A Bedside Mystery by GEORGE ZUCKERMAN



She more than attracted him; she compelled him, and from the first fiery moment of their affair he began to learn what heaven and hell were really like



NOTHING mattered but zero and double-zero. Miami Beach, the Emerald Club, the cute blonde date, my recent Broadway success, and all the money I had in the bank didn't matter. I cared about nothing but the two house numbers I was playing—zero and double-zero.

I had an idea the roulette table was crooked, as crooked as a world without happiness can be. And I had the foolish notion that winning would make me feel good, make me feel satiated with vengeance and victory. I knew that if I won I would give the money to the cute blonde—Margie Somebody—as a memento of an otherwise dull evening.

Then, all of a sudden, zero and double-zero didn't matter any more.

Nothing mattered but a new sound that rose above the clicking of the ball against the wheel and over the din of the spacious gambling room.

My eyes were wide open, but I was blind. There was no thought of seeing on my brain, only the thought of listening to and hearing and remembering the voice rising out of a distant yesterday.

A blues song.

It was a blues song, an unmistakable blues song; and the voice with its husky softness and the small trick of tremolo on the high notes was unmistakable. For an instant I thought I was mad. "Stay here," I muttered to Margie.

She looked cute and bewildered, but she didn't move. She didn't follow me as I walked past faces and bodies toward the open doors leading to the big room with the long bar, the small square tables and the bandstand.

I looked once, just one look—and eighteen months fell away. There was no mistaking the tall redhead, the wild hair, and the delicate features. Slowly, with my eyes still on her, I edged toward the bar, sat down on a stool, and heard the intruding voice of the bartender.

"Scotch and water," I mumbled.

The next intruding sound was the slapping of a glass against the bar top. I lifted the glass and looked at the jowly face of the bartender. "Know her?" I asked.

"Know who?"

I put the glass down. "The singer."

"Yeah, I know her." He wasn't giving away information.

"What's her . . . ?"

"Lela Cade."

I looked at the redhead again and saw flames shooting and smoke billowing. "Where does she stay?" I said.

"Another Scotch?" he countered.

I answered with a ten-dollar bill.

He took it. "Want change?"

"Information."

"What kind?"

"The kind I asked for."

The bartender looked around. He walked away and served two Martinis to a near-by couple. Then he came back. "The Tropical Coast Hotel—that's a nice place," he said softly, his eyes on the bar.

"Know any room numbers?"

"Bungalow B," he said, and eased away from me.

I tried to listen to the last chorus of the song, but Margie interrupted me. She stood in front of me looking cute and flabbergasted and telling me double-zero had won.

"It's all yours," I muttered. "Run it up to a million."

"But . . . ?"

"I'm leaving."

"Why? What's the matter, Earl?"

"Got an idea for a song," I lied. "I've got to get to a piano. You understand, don't you?"

I had no song on my mind, of course, except the one Lela Cade was now concluding—and that was a song I never wrote. I told Margie that I might see her tomorrow.

Before I left the Emerald Club, I glanced once toward the bartender. He was talking to a sawed-off man. Strangely enough, I had the feeling they were talking about me.

I asked the taxi driver for speed, and so he turned corners on two wheels and made believe he had never heard of traffic regulations. I *had* to get there fast, for I hadn't seen Lela Cade in eighteen months, and I wanted to be alone in her room. I wanted to be alone long enough to look around and see everything that was there. If I found what I thought I *would* find, I would rush out of the room and out of Miami Beach; I would try to forget everything that had happened—everything but the fact that double-zero won.

The Tropical Coast Hotel catered to top-drawer tourists. There were several hundred rooms in the main five-story building, and behind it was a curving row of bungalows.

I went through the patio and across the concrete walks winding about lighted artificial fountains, and at last I found Bungalow B.

The door was locked and the windows dark. For a moment I stood there, looking about to make certain I wasn't being watched, and then I tried one of the windows. It opened easily.

Inside the room, I found a lamp, pulled a metal chain, and watched the yellow light flood the living room and all its maroon and dark green furniture. I saw flowers in vases, magazines in racks, cigarette butts in ash trays. Then I moved to the bedroom and hit the light switch. Quickly, I started to open and examine every drawer I could find.

I found plenty of women's flimsy garments, but I couldn't find what I was looking for. I didn't find it in any of the closets, in the bathroom, or in the kitchenette.

I found bottles all right. Pop bottles. Perfume bottles. Medicine bottles.

But no bottles of gin, whisky, wine or beer.

Satisfied, I turned out all the lights and sat down in a soft chair in the living room. I smoked a cigarette and waited for Lela Cade. As long as there were no gin bottles in her room, I felt I wanted to see Lela again. The world, I knew, was cockeyed, and roulette wheels were crooked. But sometimes double-zero wins, and sometimes you get the wild idea you can win back what you've lost, what you've wanted more than anything in the whole world.

I wanted Lela Cade again, and I was prepared to take another chance, a chance worth taking as long as the gin bottles weren't stacked against us.

I had just lighted my second cigarette when I heard a key in the door lock. I crushed the cigarette in an ash tray, cleared my throat, and prepared to say hello again to Lela Cade.

The door opened. The lights flashed. And no Lela Cade. Only *(Continued on page 110)*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DENVER GILLEN

Lights! Camera! Action!

Denton was bothered by a tight girdle, a rough hang-over and a director he disliked. But he forgot about the camera and gave the best performance of his life

A Story by

STEVE APRIL

THE make-up man added more drops to Denton's eyes, looked his face over carefully, and said, "Looks okay now, Mr. Denton, only a *few* veins showing. Covered up the pimples on your forehead too."

Denton said thanks and felt lousy. He had a hang-over that made him feel as if his brain was a series of jagged points rubbing against one another. As he got out of the make-up chair and saw himself in the mirror—a short, handsome, slender man with a weak mouth—he wondered when he *hadn't* been handsome and slender, when he hadn't had the silly smile women went nuts about. The make-up man asked, without smiling, "Care for some mints, Mr. Denton?"

For a moment the actor stared coldly at him, then abruptly turned away, feeling his girdle pressing his backside as he walked. When he reached the set, Denton held his hand to his mouth, smelled his breath, and sent out for a box of mints.

Gregg Hanson came over to him. Gregg was a quiet, smart director, and Denton didn't like quiet people. In fact, at the moment Denton didn't like the studio, the story, the star, the new leading lady, or the world. Denton had a big house, several cars, and over fifty grand in the bank; he had been making pictures for the past twenty years and had been a star for several of them. Although he had only a featured role in this picture and although his ulcers were acting up and he certainly didn't need the money, he was as eager to make a hit as a newcomer.

Gregg said, "Ready to work, Hal?"

"What work?" Denton asked. "I don't have a line to say in this scene, not even a belch."

"Acting isn't all dialogue," Gregg said, looking at Denton's faintly bloodshot eyes. "She's really just a green kid. You can steal the scene from her quite easily."

"Steal the scene from her with my back to the camera?" Denton asked savagely.

"A good actor can use any part of his body for business," Gregg said softly. He turned and motioned to the assistant director, who was hovering behind him. "Ed, get me Miss Worth and the script girl."

Denton stared at the back of Gregg's head for a moment, so angry that he wanted to walk off the set. In the old days a director wouldn't have *dared* treat me this way, he thought. To hell with the old days. Hanson can have me thrown off the set if he wants—and he's the kind of jerk who'd do it, too. By God, I swear it—when I get on top again, I'll make him eat dirt, right up to his big ears! (There was a rapidly increasing list of people for whom Denton planned a dirt meal in the future.)

Miss Jo Ann Worth was a small, slim girl with a pleasant young face, big starry eyes, and healthy shoulders and smooth skin above her bodice. She gave Denton a practiced smile as she came on the set. When they had first met, she had said, "I've always longed to meet you, Mr. Denton. I was one of your fans. You were my first crush . . . when I was a little kid." Denton had grinned politely. You skinny little snip, he thought—*when you were a kid*!

"I'm sure you both understand this scene," Gregg said. "Simplicity is its charm. Jo, you're a chemist, and remember—a lady scientist back in 1890 was considered shocking. Hal, as your elder brother, has warned you that you can't have two lovers—science *and* the boy you're engaged to. You have just told him you choose science. Overcome by what he thinks is a wrong choice, he throws his arms around you, and then you go into your speech. I know it's a long speech, Jo, but I'd like to get it in one take. We'll cut a couple of close-ups into the scene, but not too many. It's a difficult speech and—"

"I can do it, Mr. Hanson," Miss Worth said eagerly. "In *The Lampman*, on Broadway, I had a speech that ran for nearly two pages. I have this one down letter-perfect."

Here we go, off to Broadway, Denton thought. These superior Broadway stars! I've turned down a million Broadway offers. What in God's name is so special about Broadway?

Gregg said gently, "I'm sure you can do it, baby. Above all, you both must remember that tenderness is the keynote of this scene. Hal, you feel to the depths of your heart that your beloved little sister is making a terrible mistake. Jo, although you love your young man deeply, you realize what your experiments will mean to the future of medicine—and you *must* go on. Now, I'd like to get this the first time, but don't worry about it. Take it easy: this is the most important scene in the picture, and I don't care if we spend the whole day getting it right." He nodded to the script girl.

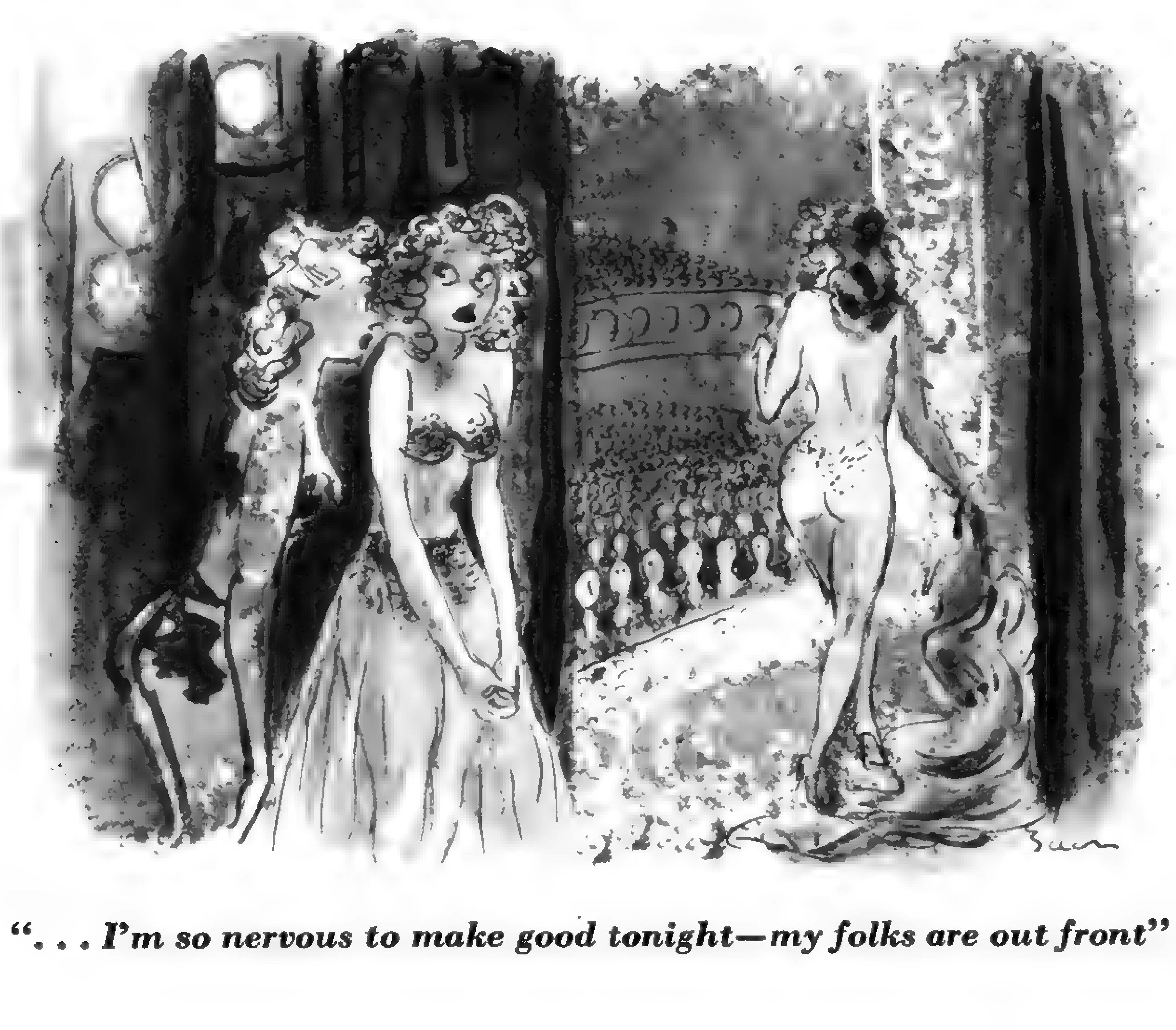
In a clear, dull voice, the script girl began reading. "Oh, my darling brother, I know I have a difficult choice, but the world needs my work and I must . . ."

It took her nearly four minutes to read the part. When she finished, Gregg said, "That's the longest speech since Sam Jaffe's Grand Lama lines in *Lost Horizon*. Shall we make pictures?"

Jo nodded. Her eyes already had a far-away look, and even Denton had to admire the way she was working herself into a mood. Gregg waved to the assistant director, who immediately started shouting, and there was a great deal of running about on the set—everybody busy but the actors. Denton called over the make-up man, who gave him more drops in his eyes, careful not to spoil his make-up.

The actors stepped into a heavily furnished old-fashioned parlor. Miss Worth sat on a tiny footstool, her long skirt neatly arranged about her feet. Denton sat on the floor, his arms around her, his back to the camera. His face was against her dress, just below the bodice, and he could feel the stiffness of the cloth.

Gregg stared at them thoughtfully, then stepped back *(Continued in center of page 92)*



". . . I'm so nervous to make good tonight—my folks are out front"

Hold That Tiger! →

A HIGHLIGHT of B'way's *Inside USA* is the sensational slinking and leaping of Valerie Bettis, whose Tiger Lily gives long-hair dancing a crew cut and a lot of new friends. With an insouciant face and a saucy strut, she does more for the modern dance than the guy who discovered feet.

KODACHROME BY MUKY

Where Are the Postwar Novels?

Remember all the wartime talk of The Great Postwar Novels? Here's a crisp indictment of the jazzed-up substitutes you've been offered the past three years

An Article by

RICHARD B. GEHMAN

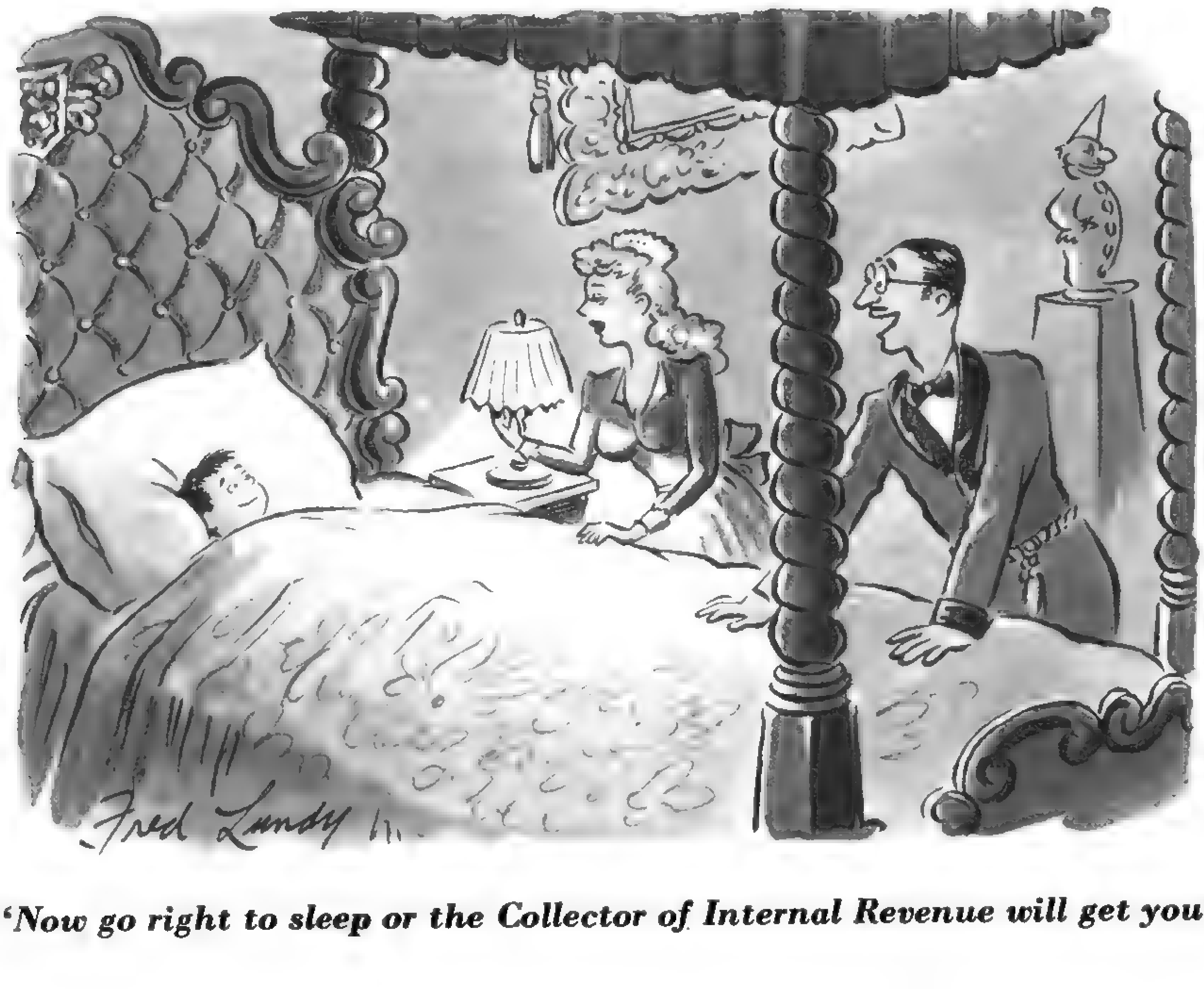
ALL during the war, the literary heralds of the nation—critics, reviewers, columnists, and, most of all, publishers' promotion men—kept waving their chubby arms and shouting that the postwar period would bring on a flood of new American writers and writing that would make the golden twenties seem tarnished in comparison. "Just wait and see!" they cried, like so many Grover Whalens planning welcomes for returning heroes. At the time, it seemed that they had about as much chance of being wrong as the average man has of evading this year's income tax.

To begin with, the giants of the twenties had either died or been shrunken to midgets by the passage of time. Ernest Hemingway's two most recent novels, *To Have and Have Not* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* were far inferior to his early books; F. Scott Fitzgerald and Sherwood Anderson were both dead; John Dos Passos, producing factual books and articles, no longer seemed interested in fiction; and Sinclair Lewis had stooped to writing mass-magazine schmaltz like *Cass Timberlane*. Even the exciting novelists who had come along during the thirties appeared to have sold their admirers down the river. James T. Farrell, having delivered himself of *Studs Lonigan*, his major work, was turning out books that, for sheer tedium, have seldom been rivaled since the days of Harold Bell Wright; John Steinbeck, engaged during the war in journalism, finally produced *The Wayward Bus*, which read like the work of a particularly backward housewife at a summer writers' conference; James M. Cain, never a powerful threat to anybody's fiction crown, was earning his orange juice in Hollywood; William Faulkner, stating that he had nothing to say for the time being, also went west during the war (he, at least, produced a novel in the Fall of 1948, however, which has a spark of the old flame); and John O'Hara was shuttling back and forth between *The New Yorker* offices and the movie studios. (Nobody is speaking here, of course, of the lady writers: bless them, they went on hemstitching their little books and signing their three neat names.)

Thus, with most of the big boys dead, dormant, or dedicated to Hollywood, and with new writers appearing every day, it seemed reasonable to suppose that a revival would take place. Conditions were never better: more people than ever before had begun reading books during the war. The publishers were growing richer and more daring, bringing out the work of young experimentalists who wouldn't have been given a second glance in prewar days.

Today, more than three years into the postwar period, the long-awaited rebirth of literature is still being awaited. Most of the prophets are either playing ostrich or applying pancake make-up to their deep crimson faces; others, a little bolder, are shrugging with nervous nonchalance and saying, "Oh, well—it's *still* a little early."

Like fun it is. Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* appeared in 1919, less than one year after the Armistice; Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street* and F. Scott Fitzgerald's first novel, *This Side of Paradise*, came the following year. These three books had one thing in common: they were accurate yet artistic pictures of their time, and they were not bound by contemporary exigencies. All three of them are still being read today.



"Now go right to sleep or the Collector of Internal Revenue will get you"

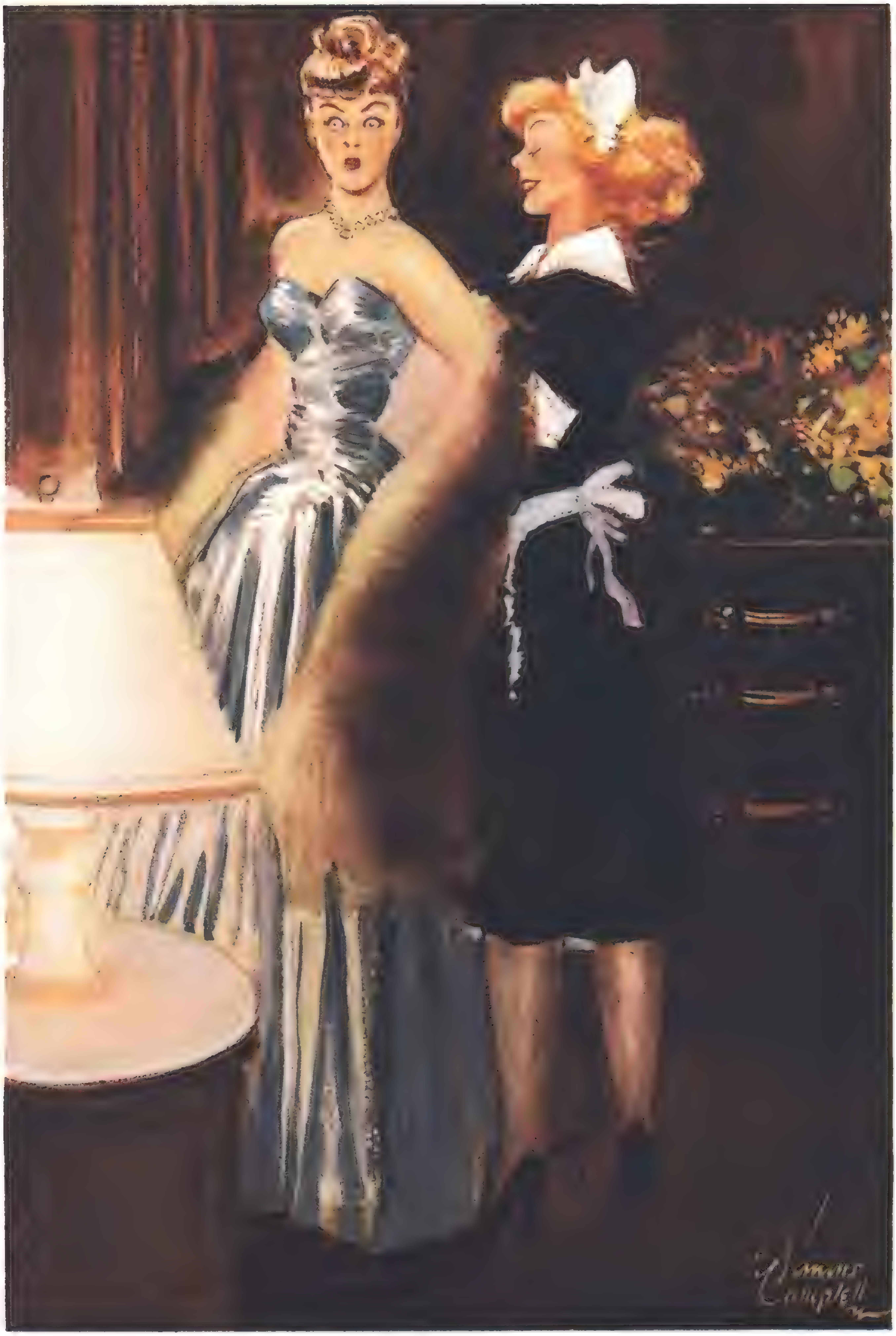
It's doubtful if the same will be said some twenty-eight years from now about the rather dubious crop of books harvested since the end of World War II. In comparison with the fruit of the twenties, the new American writing is a flat, tasteless substance; stacked up beside some of the postwar exports from England and France, it reads as though it were written by a group of anxious, precocious children. Here and there are signs of a genuine talent beginning to emerge, but these signs are few and far between.

The thing that stands out is that the new writers seem to lack a real sense of the conditions and the time in which they are living. It may be that most people have become so bewildered by national and international problems that they are unable to see beyond their own spheres; or it may be that our youngsters, influenced by book-club regulations and the fair Hollywood goddess, have lost sight of the novelist's mission. Whatever the cause, the unhappy fact remains that the newcomers are giving us little more than vague, immature introspection, reminiscent of the work of our second-rate lady writers, or glib reportage that were better left on the pages of the daily newspapers. The idea now seems to be that all one needs to do to produce a novel is to write about scenes he knows, and to throw in more drinking and more sex than any one person could possibly know. Do this, the new rule book says, and you're Significant. Profundity and virility seem to have run out of American writing; and, almost as bad, so has technique. Most of the new books are written in a slapdash way that must make the fingers of English professors itch to correct them.

(At this point it should be made clear, I suppose, that these paragraphs are concerned only with books about the postwar period in the United States. Despite the fact that most publishers claim that the public is apathetic toward war novels, a number of interesting ones have come out in the past year or so: *The Gallery*, by John Horne Burns, which is set in wartime Italy; *The Gesture*, by John Cobb, the story of a courageous Air Force officer's incapacity to act like a human being; *The Steeper Cliff*, by David Davidson, dealing with an American officer in Occupied Germany; *The Assault*, by Allen Matthews, the story of a Pacific-island invasion; and, finally, *The Naked and the Dead*, by Norman Mailer, hailed as the best thing yet. All four merit discussion—but in an article dealing with books about the war.)

The current trends in writing can be illustrated, obliquely, by a story I heard a few months ago in the San Remo Café, a Greenwich Village hangout. I was at a table with an unpublished man of letters and another fellow who might be termed an unlettered publishers' man. The man of letters—a tall, bony specimen with eyes like a remorseful Karloff—had been on a three-day bender and was try-

(*Continued on page 91*)


Simms Campbell

"While you were out, your Mr. Drake called—let's just call him our Mr. Drake from now on"

Mammon and the Lady

The gentlest thing about the gentler sex is its respectful treatment of legal tender—its own, of course, that is. Yours, on the other hand, will do very nicely for spending

An Article by

HERB GRAFFIS

You must have noticed that there are very few women down-and-outers prowling that last port of bums, Skid Row.

Why? The answer is easy. Women simply don't go broke the way men do. There is plenty of talk about the big, loose spending by women, but the talk neglects to mention one important point: the money women spend is men's! When a woman gets a dollar that's her very loving own, she can generally be separated from it only by a fiscal Caesarean. Whatever she buys with her *own* cash has to be worth more than she pays for it. The tender, gentle, romantic female is crassly materialistic. No woman ever said poetically that with her last buck she would buy a book and a lily—not even those who would be considered most likely to make that statement, such as the lady writers and actresses who have become wealthy.

Many a woman who has made a fortune on stage or screen has a well-deserved reputation for carefulness with her own earnings. Seldom does she buy big estates or expensive jewelry or valuable paintings with her own money—except as an investment. And if the project doesn't promise an almost immediate increase in value, she won't authorize the investment.

When she is spending someone else's money, however, she develops a more generous streak. She won't hesitate to put up a good argument with her studio for a lavish clothes budget for her forthcoming pictures, and she's quite a help to her husband in suggesting ways to disburse his income.

In many ways, it's a good thing that the average woman is closer with a buck of her own than 99-⅞ is to 100. It's *her* niggardliness that often makes her husband a success with more money than he needs—and more ulcers, too. The average male—the dope—works either because he likes it or because he is the victim of a bad habit. What he gets for his work, in the form of legal tender, would be a secondary consideration were it not for female pressure. His wife, or his pet girl friend, keeps nagging him about her need for a new mink coat or a diamond bracelet until, after a couple of weeks of that expert needling, the formerly contented male gets in the mood for sabotaging the Ten Commandments and picketing the Kingdom of Heaven. As a result, he raises so much hell with the boss that the boss raises his pay.

Then the little woman decides that it will help her husband to greater success if they raise their standard of living to take up the slack in their newly increased income, and everything begins all over again. The mink coat soon is relegated to her group of sports clothes, to be worn to football games, to throw over her riding habit, etc. Even her diamond bracelet seems a little lusterless when compared with the diamond bracelets the women in her new social group have been able to wheedle from their husbands. However, the old diamond bracelet can be made to do for a year or so, but a sable coat is an absolute must—and she begins needling her husband to get another raise with which she can purchase such a coat to wear for "good."

And when she isn't putting on a campaign for adornment for herself, she has other good suggestions for spending her spouse's money: a bigger as well as a better home (the more expensive places are always available); more exclusive—and consequently more expensive—schools for the children; and so on until she moves up into the small-yacht class.

But that's how progress is made. When the male finds himself in love, he is thinking of the June moon, but the female in a comparable situation hums that song of songs: "Honey, Money!" To a woman there is no box-office appeal in a sarong. She wants a wardrobe; and, while she is doing her planning, she is perfectly willing to allow the poor deluded male to dream those sweet dreams from which he'll be abruptly and rudely awakened when the mailman starts bringing the bills right after the first of the month.

One of the great love stories that these United States have contributed to the literature of romance (that includes the tales of Dante and Beatrice and of Abélard and Héloïse) is that of Hetty Green and her heart's own mate. As a young woman, Hetty decided that men were not to be trusted because she could take money from them too easily. Then one day she met a gentleman who complained about having to pay all of eighteen dollars for a suit of clothes. That made sense to Hetty, who certainly was well aware of the value of money, and so she and the gentleman who was careful with his money were married and lived happily—if penuriously—ever after.

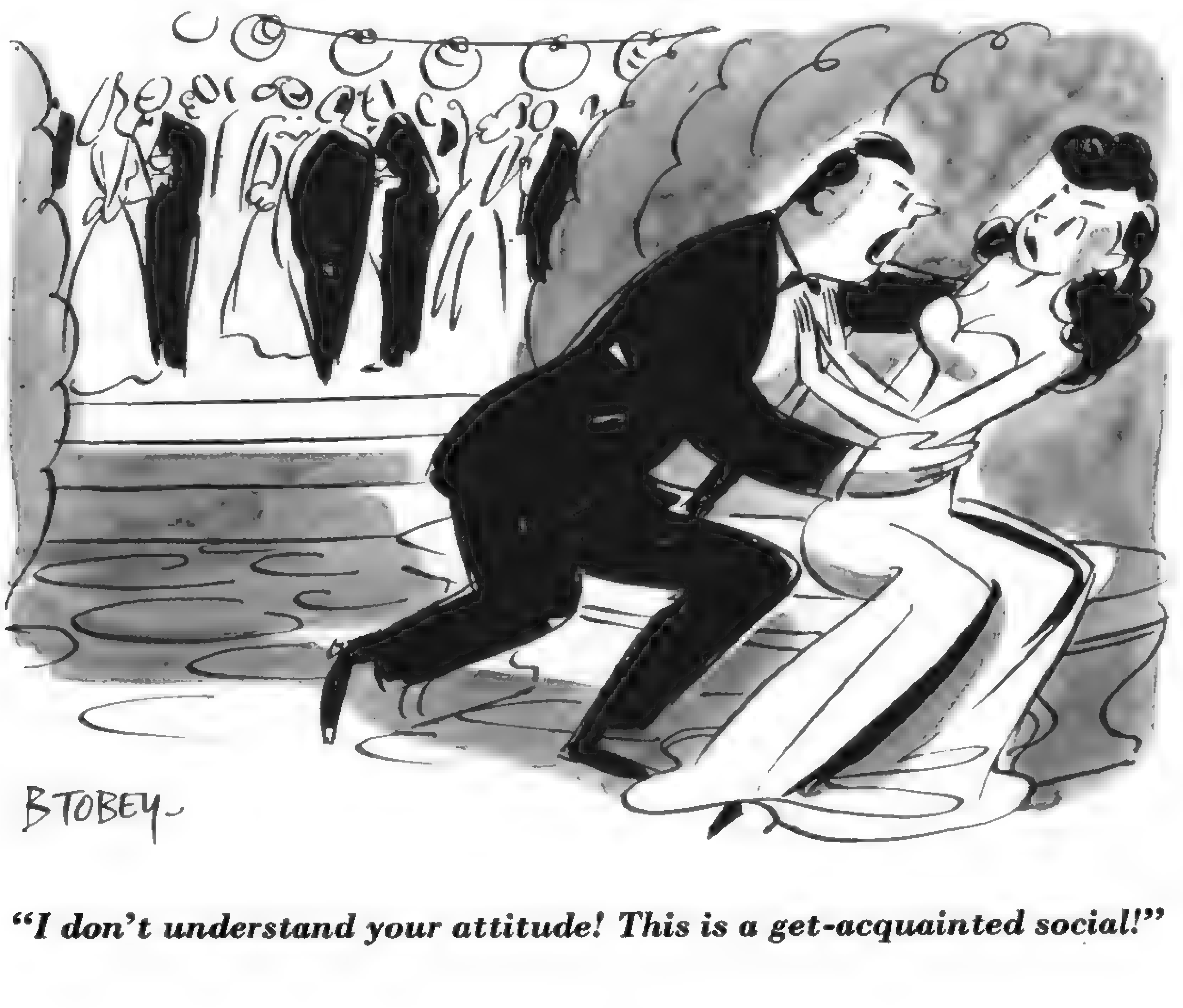
Mrs. Green was unquestionably one of our very first citizens of all time, and millions remember her who couldn't tell you who was one of the Best-Dressed Women of 1947. Hetty didn't worry much about being well-dressed; but make no mistake about it—she was a thoroughly feminine female. Her intense femininity in giving birth to about $100,000,000 is something the world will long remember.

Like most women, she was a true aesthete too. Throughout her life, avoiding the gaudy trifles that normally attract women, she collected etchings—and she collected them in quantity. You know the kind—they're of convenient folding size and those you are lucky enough to have in your possession right now bear the signatures of the Treasurer of the United States and of the Secretary of the Treasury.

That keen appreciation of true art is shared by all good business women who have to earn what they spend. And this works out to the good of the male. The business executive finds that he has considerably more money in the bank when his smart female secretary handles his bills and takes care of his checkbook. His smart secretary saves money for him so that his smart wife can spend it smartly.

Women's souls are tenderest when there is cash around or in prospect. To watch a loving mother look at her sleeping tot as she envisions the infant growing up to be highly solvent—what a glorious picture of mother love that is!

Yes, woman is materialistic and mercenary. And praise be to Allah for that. Otherwise, we might go fishing every day—and how much fish can you eat? #



"I don't understand your attitude! This is a get-acquainted social!"

The esquire FISHERMAN'S folio

As inward love breeds outward talk,
The hound some praise, and some the hawk:
Some, better pleased with private sport,
Use tennis, some a mistress court:
But these delights I neither wish,
Nor envy, while I freely fish.

—The Compleat Angler

HOW TO CATCH

Piscatorial Pointers for the Connoisseur of Angling

The Delicate Art of Trouting—In 1653, Izaak Walton wrote: "Doubt not that Angling is an art . . . he that hopes to be a good Angler must not only bring an . . . observing wit . . . he must bring a large measure of hope and patience." His advice still holds even though you may throw a fly in some likely-looking eddy and be rewarded at once. But to sit quietly and wait for a good trout while lesser fish splash water in your face takes patience. And when the big fish does come up, to sit even longer and wait for him to "go steady"—that's sheer will power. But that's the way to catch them. When they surface for a quick bite, in jumps some Charlie Piscatore who shoots out a fast one and the trout plunges. As feeding progresses, big fish surface—oblivious to anything but eating. Then a trout's a cinch to catch. But the infrequent riser—the fish who meets too many Charlies—boils to the surface, gets scared and goes home. Later, still hungry, he's up again and gets popped in the eye with another fly. That's the big one you hear about—and if you don't bide your time—he gets away.

•

Guide for Game Fishing—Get a good one, as he does the lion's share in capturing the quarry. True, the guy who plays 500-pound tuna on 6-thread line or white marlin on a fly rod is asking for trouble and needs help. But, considering that featherweight females have landed 800-pound tuna while muscle men go fishless—there must be something to be said for the brigadier of the poop deck.

When fighting deep-running fish over the stern, the guide should head down sea. It's up to you to time each pump of the rod with the lift of the waves as you move away from the fish. Once away, the giant can be "slid" towards the surface. Quickly turning, the guide will buzz over the fish while you reel in slack. If you've ever sweated with a half ton of fish under the stern, you'll appreciate a wide-awake scow jockey. The boatman knows when the fish has zoomed ahead of the angler toward the boat and guns his engine accordingly. If the fish makes a long run for a rock pile, as striped bass do, the guide will have the boat on the offshore side in jig time. No matter how the rod's held—it's the guide that makes the difference.

•

Free-Reeling Fly Casters—Although no stunt for a beginner, for the veteran deep-water wader who swings a heavy rod and torpedo-head at arm's length all day, carrying the reel under the arm or on the belt is a great advantage. Hitched à la shoulder holster, the reel is out of the way and the casting hand is free to lay in to a long "shoot." Actually, a fly reel is nothing but a storage device and not an integral part of the equipment, as is a bait-casting reel. Once used, most reel free-casters claim you'll never go back to swinging a full-load topside.

•

Longer Casts from Less Line—The average fly line is from 90 to 99 feet, but few casters work out to this distance. To better 90 feet, clip your line off between the 50- and 60-foot mark—the exact spot depending on how smoothly your rod picks up the extended line. Then splice on a braided nylon or cuttyhunk line of 15- or 18-pound test. There's enough weight in 60 feet of fly line

MORE FISH

to bring out the maximum in the average rod. The caster swings this maximum line load, then "shoots" the rest. The reason you can't get out 90 feet of vacuum-dressed fly line is friction. The heavy diameter of the shooting portion just drags through the guides, but a well-spliced braided line rubbed in graphite takes off like a greyhound.

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Getting Fish to Gaff—The fixed-spool reel has gained thousands of converts in this country, but many anglers don't know what to do *after* they hook a big fish. It's been taken for granted that the slipping clutch provides a foolproof defense against line breakage, which it does, but it doesn't get the fish to gaff if the clutch does nothing but slip. Big fish are killed by pressing the spool with the forefinger (to prevent rotation by a sudden spurt of the quarry), bringing the rod from horizontal to vertical and then quickly lowering the tip while reeling in the slack gained. You retrieve line foot by foot, but you pump the fish dizzy in the process.

●

Modern Rod Construction—all other factors of workmanship being equal, varies very little. So stop those "wee" hour sessions on four- to six-strip rod construction by pointing out the simple fact that modern glues are stronger than bamboo. Valid arguments in the past concerning stress and tension were based on the theory that these forces worked against the glue line. But more intricate constructions, double- and triple-built, and the combination woods of big game rods should be thoroughly studied if you're going after heavyweight fish.

●

Pacific Salmon Snap at Flies—That's contrary to eastern propaganda but as a matter of fact, a silver salmon in salt-chuck, or a big chinook in skookum-chuck (fast water) will tear the ratchet out of a fly reel. That most anglers on the Pacific coast use heavy tackle is a tribute to the salmon's prowess—not his reluctance. Salmon like their flies in large sizes, tied streamer fashion with wings of polar bear hair. The silver salmon is an avid fly taker and jumps like a maniac when he feels the barb.

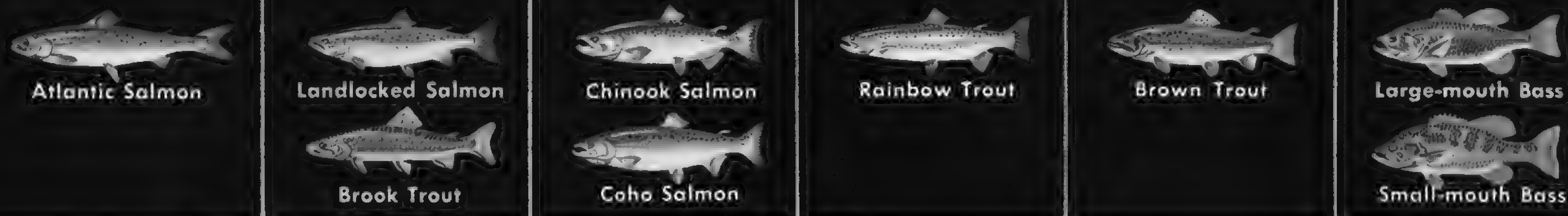
●

Luring Large-mouth Bass—This one's thought of as a big lure addict, a connoisseur of wooden minnows and feathered hardware—he's also a sucker for small trout flies in clear water. The next time you hear the slurping pop of a feeding big-mouth get out your pet trout floaters and try them. Many bass fishermen have a one-track-mind—big lure, big fish. 'Taint so . . .

●

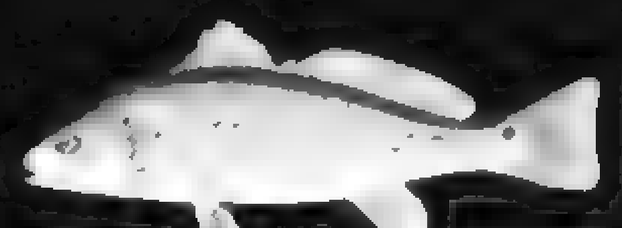
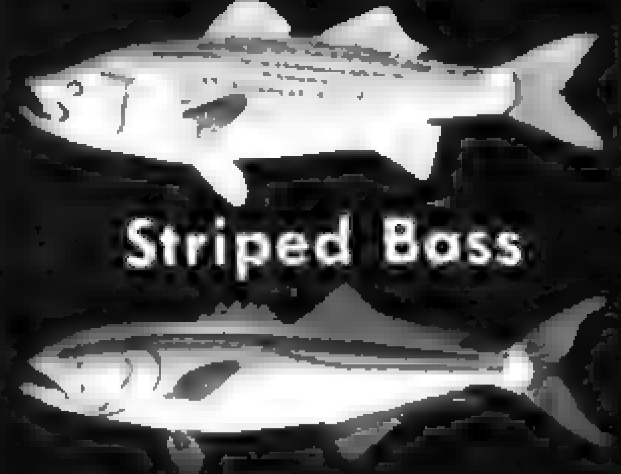
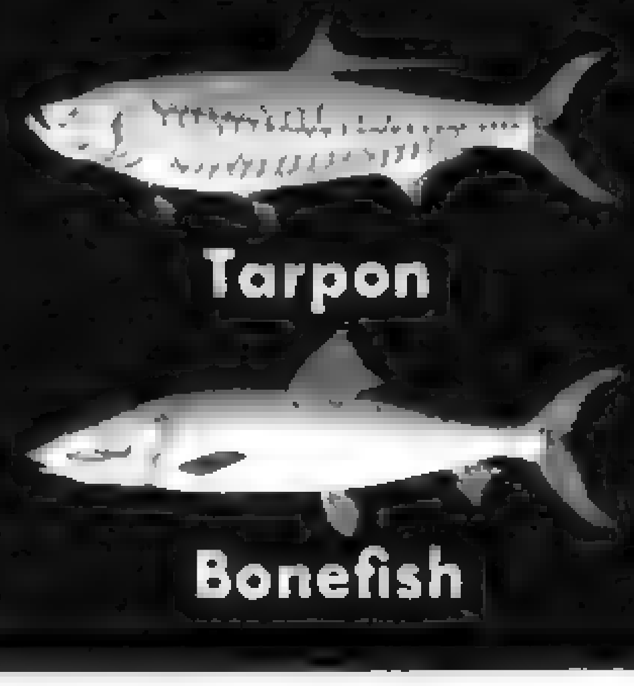
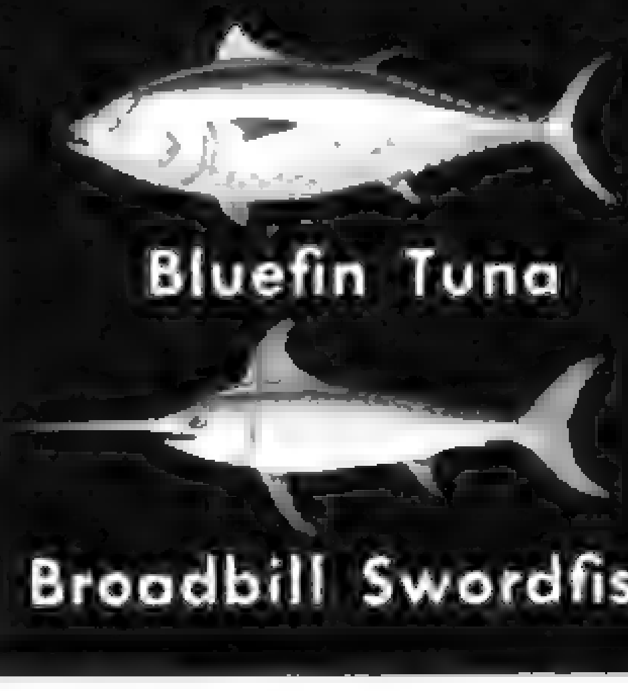
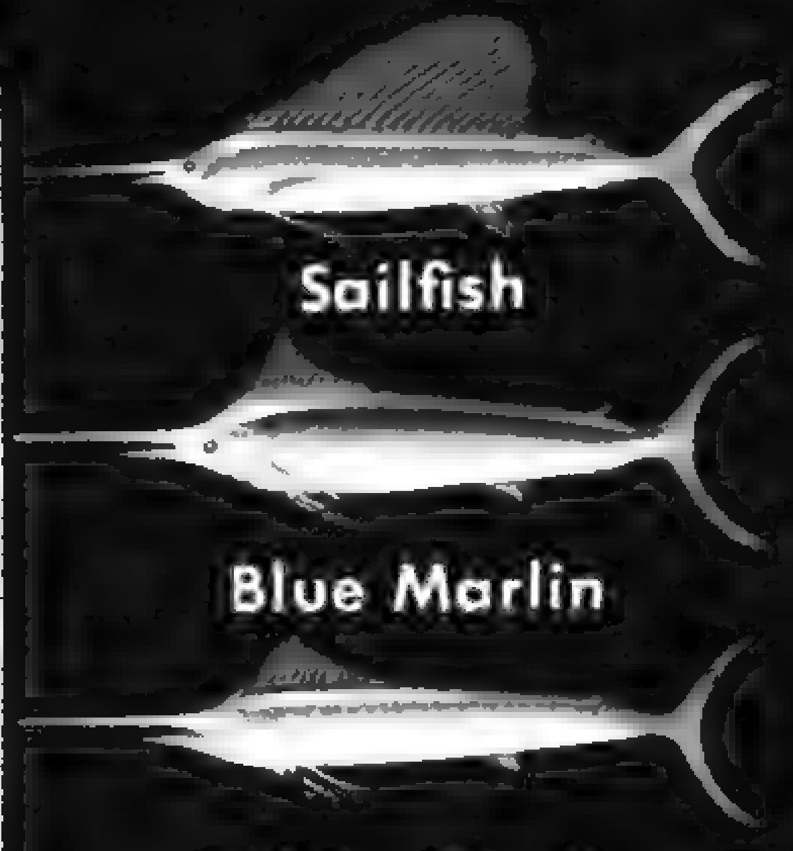
Greased Line Fishing is often misunderstood by anglers after salmon and steelheads, as the term not only describes the lines but implies a method of presenting the fly—so deadly and difficult that only genuine experts have the skill. Basically, the line is used as a controlling agent, the fly being completely out of touch. The fly is suspended just under the film of surface and moves down and across stream entirely free from the slightest pull or drag. It amounts to floating a curved line in order to present a broadside view of the lure to the fish. No matter how the fish moves to grasp the fly, he moves against the line which is curved on the surface downstream. This simple pressure of striking against the "belly" tightens and sets the hook. In effect, the current, not the angler, drives it home. Even as the fish takes the fly, he feels no unnatural drag because of the free-floating line—then when he drives for the bottom, the hook slips back in his mouth and holds fast. It's one of the neatest tricks in fly-fishing.

THE TOP FISHING REGIONS



	Atlantic Salmon	Landlocked Salmon Brook Trout	Chinook Salmon Coho Salmon	Rainbow Trout	Brown Trout	Large-mouth Bass Small-mouth Bass
WHERE	New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Maine, Quebec.	Maine, Quebec, New Hampshire, Vermont, Nova Scotia, Ontario.	Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, California.	Idaho, British Columbia, Alaska, Oregon, Washington, Michigan, California, New Zealand.	Montana, Colorado, Wyoming, Michigan, New York, New Mexico, California.	Ontario, New Brunswick, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Arkansas, Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, Maine.
WHEN	May through September but best in June and July. Often fast fishing in month of April for "black" salmon.	Spring and fall as a rule. Best just after ice-out and again in September. Some deep lakes are productive during summer months but check before planning.	As a rule, the months of July and August are best for chinooks, late September and October for coho, but it depends on where you go. Salmon can be had all year 'round, however, if you follow their migrations.	In general, April to October. Largest share of coastal rainbows (steel heads) caught in winter months (November and December). Summer-run steelheads from June through September.	In general, May, June and July are best months for prize winners. In the far west good trout fishing begins with the eastern decline and lasts through fall.	In southern waters from March through May; in north, July to October. Florida waters produce the big ones all year round but February, July and October are best.
HOW	Fly casting by law and preference. Angler can wade most rivers, but a good share of the fishing is done from guide boats or canoes. Wet or dry fly. Small trout patterns now popular.	Fly casting, spinning gear. Some anglers troll small spoons and flies or use live smelt early in the season for lake fishing.	Fly casting, spinning and trolling from skiff or rowboat. Chinooks don't respond to flies in *all* rivers but the coho is fly fisherman quarry. Polar bear, optic streamer flies may be cast among schooling cohos.	Fly casting, spinning, bait casting and trolling. To the fly fisherman the rainbow is principally a wet-fly fish. Very susceptible to spinners and spoons of all sorts.	Fly casting, spinning, trolling and bait casting in some of the larger rivers. The brownie is traditionally sought with the dry fly.	Fly fishing, bait casting, spinning and trolling. Bass is most sought game fish in America. The large-mouth is often found in mud-bottomed lakes, the small-mouth in gravel-bottomed waters.
TACKLE	A 9-foot fly rod between 5½ and 6½ oz. in weight. Good, sturdy, single-action reel with 100 yards of 18-lb. test backing plus the fly line.	Long fly rod (9 or 9½ feet) preferable for casting from canoe. For wading, short rod should be light (4 to 5 oz.) as lakes are free of snags and fish can be handled with maximum sport in open water.	3-6 tackle (6 oz. tip and 6-thread line) 2/0 reel, spoons and plugs. For fly fishing, a 9- or 9½-foot rod of 6 or 7 oz. in weight. At least 150 yards of backing.	A 5 to 7 oz. fly rod for most western waters. Heavy spinning and bait casting gear. Troll big lakes with 3-6 tackle. Torpedo head line recommended for western rivers with nylon backing (100 – 150 yds).	Light to heavy weight fly rods, depending on size of water being fished and average size of trout. An 8½-foot, 4¾-oz. rod is standard. For spinning, a 7- or 7½-foot rod with 4- to 7½-pound test line.	Nine-foot fly rod from 5 to 6½ oz. Bait casting rod from 4½ to 6 feet. Short rod popular in south, 5½- and 6-foot lengths for open, northern waters where light lures are used. Standard spinning gear.
REMARKS	Atlantic salmon fishing has been on the increase in Maine: The Dennys, Penobscot, Narraguagus, St. Croix and Pleasant Rivers are top spots. Record catch: 79 lbs. 2 oz., Tanaelu, Norway, 1928.	Best landlocked are in Maine's lakes and rivers. Record: Landlocked – 22½ lbs., Sebago Lake, Maine, 1907; brook trout–14½ lbs., Nipigon River, Ontario, 1916.	Best Pacific salmon fishing on the continent is in Alaska and at Campbell River, B. C.	Maybe a 6 pounder or better in late fall (October-November) Michigan runs. Twenty-pounders run in Idaho's Lake Pend Oreille, May to November. Record: 37 lbs., Lake Pend Oreille, Idaho, 1947.	Although fishing for brown trout is good in U. S., the classic brown trout fishing is in the chalk streams of England, a "beat" costing from $5000 up. Record: 39½ lbs., Loch Awe, Scotland, 1866.	Florida's the largest bass producer but an Arkansas "float trip" is a must for bass anglers. Record: Large-mouth –22¼ lbs., Montgomery Lake, Ga., 1932; Small-mouth – 14 lbs., Oakland, Fla., 1932.

OF NORTH AMERICA

Muskellunge	 Channel Bass	 Striped Bass Bluefish	 Tarpon Bonefish	 Bluefin Tuna Broadbill Swordfish	 Sailfish Blue Marlin White Marlin
Ontario, Wisconsin, New York, Minnesota.	New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida.	Massachusetts, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Pacific Coast.	Bahamas, Florida, Texas, Mexico.	Maine, Nova Scotia, Massachusetts, Bahamas, New York, California.	Cuba (north coast), Bahamas, Florida, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Mexico, Pacific Coast (Pacific sailfish).
In general from June through October. Late fall fishing very spotty. Old timers claim that the best fishing occurs immediately after the season opens.	March to December. September and October best north of the Carolinas. Month of August poor for big fish all over.	In general, June, July, and August; often good in September. Bluefish runs are spotty. First big run since 1936 occurred in 1947.	In general best fishing extends from April to early June. Florida tarpon fishing at best in May.	In general from June through September. The Bahamas, in June, Catalina in July and August, late July to mid-September at Nova Scotia.	February, March, and April are tops in Florida waters. July through September in the East. Summer months are best in the Bahamas. April top month for Pacific sailfish.
Bait casting and trolling. The plug caster must learn to make the wooden minnow live if he hopes to dupe a musky, for muskies are fond of animated lures. The rule for trolling varies with the locale.	Surf casting and trolling. Red drum frequent inlets. Boats generally move alongside the schooling fish and the angler casts among them. Bait crabs, menhaden, squid, any trolled lure.	Trolling and surf casting. Bait—squid, block tin squid, eel skins, feathered jigs, plugs.	Spinning, fly casting, bait casting and trolling. Heavy bait-casting gear now most popular for tarpon, fly-casting gear for bonefish. Use a skiff with outboard for bonefish. Fly casters like to wade tidal flats.	Trolling, still-fishing, or chumming, for tuna. Guides provide cut bait, herring, mackerel, squid. Best from rowboat; some use dories. Sight broadbill on surface, come up behind, circle bait in front of fish.	Trolling. Bait—mullet, squid, balao, bonefish, barracuda, feathered jig.
Heavy bait-casting tackle. Rod 4½ to 5½ feet long. Multiplying reel with at least 100-yard line capacity. Line 18- to 24-pound test.	Standard surf tip, 6½ to 7 feet long. A 2/0 reel. Line — 12 thread; 4- and 6-ounce sinkers; 7/0 hook.	Standard surf rod 6½ to 7 feet long. Very light rod can be used for blues. 2/0 reel and 9- or 12-thread line, 3-6 tackler for trolling. Need wire leaders for blues.	3-6 for trolling with 2/0 reel for bonefish, 2/0 or 4/0 for tarpon.	For tuna—a 23 to 36 oz. tip, a 12/0 or 14/0 reel, line 36 to 54 thread—rod should be equipped with roller guides. For broadbill, a 16- to 22-oz. tip, a 10/0 or 12/0 reel, 24- to 39-thread line, depending on tip size.	For sailfish use lightest tackle possible. The tackle limit is affected by the number of sharks in the water. 16-oz. tip, 24-thread for blue marlin; 12-oz. tip, 24-thread for white; 6-oz. tip, 9-thread for sails.
Men have fished for 15 years without getting a musky. Dubs often land five in a day. Best bet probably in north Wisconsin lakes and Lake-of-the-Woods area. Record: 64½lbs., Lac du Flambeau, Wis., 1947.	Give the fish free rein—don't stand and fight it out. Never set the hook until his full weight is felt. They often pick up and drop bait. Record: 75½ lbs., Cape Hatteras, N. C., 1941.	Blues are considered by many as the hardest fighting fish in salt water. Record: Bluefish—no official record; striped bass — 73 lbs., Vineyard Sound, Mass., 1913.	Fly fishing for bonefish is quite new. Experts are using streamer-type flies in yellows and white. Record: Bonefish—13¾ lbs., Bimini, Bahamas, 1919; Tarpon—247 lbs., Panuco River, Mexico, 1938.	Tuna hook themselves, so keep light drag on initial run. Never hold fish too hard—make him do the work. Record: Tuna—927 lbs., Ipswich Bay, Mass., 1940; swordfish—860 lbs., Tocopilla, Chile, 1940.	When marlin or sailfish first hit the bait, pay out slack. Fish will hit again. Record: Sailfish—106 lbs., Miami, Fla., 1929; blue marlin—737 lbs., Bimini, 1919; white marlin—161 lbs., Miami, 1938.

10 Principal Fresh Water Game Fish

Rainbow Trout
Muskellunge
Chinook Salmon
Atlantic Salmon
Coho Salmon
Large-mouth Bass
Brown Trout
Small-mouth Bass
Landlocked Salmon
Brook Trout

10 Principal Salt Water Game Fish

Bluefish
Sailfish
White Marlin
Blue Marlin
Channel Bass
Bluefin Tuna
Tarpon
Striped Bass
Broadbill Swordfish
Bonefish

THE ART OF THE Threadline

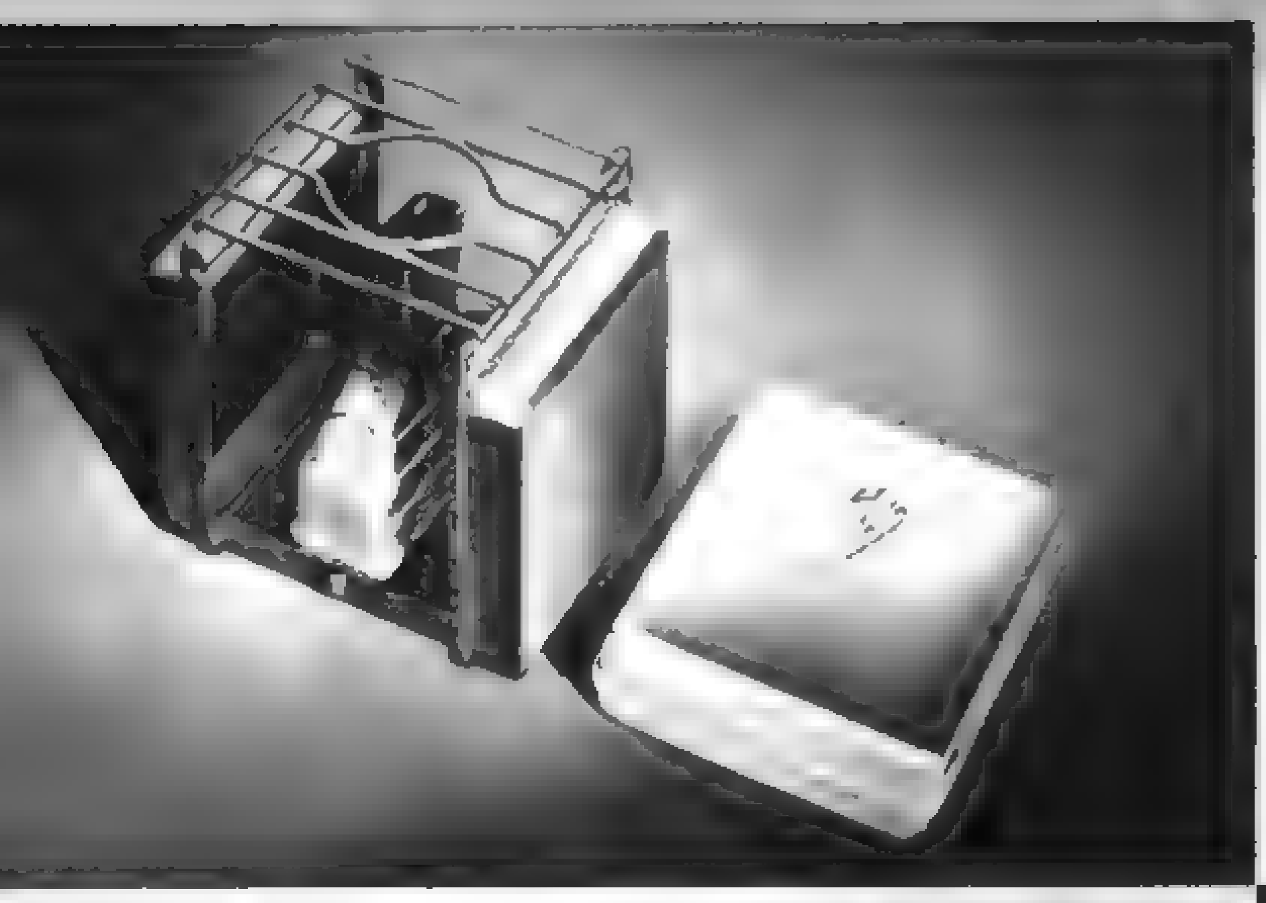
Although spinning was known to fishermen of the 17th century, it was not until recently that the art of the threadline was put to any great use by anglers. Among the many advantages it now affords, the base of its increasing popularity is due to the ease with which the equipment operates. The average person can learn to toss out 50 or 60 feet of line in ten minutes' time. Since the reel is a stationary drum, the line can't overrun as it spins off and the cast can be made from any position.

If you spear a spool of thread, using a pencil (on which it spins freely) as an axis, and pull the thread off with the other hand, you will duplicate the principle of the ordinary reel. Now, without a pencil, hold the spool at one end between thumb and forefinger—and the thread can be pulled off more swiftly, unencumbered by the resistance of the spool's turning. By the same token, the turning spool will snarl the thread should your hand stop pulling before the reel's momentum abates, whereas with the stationary spool this is impossible. When the hand stops pulling (or the lure drops to the water), the thread stops unraveling. The cast depends on the angler's holding the line between forefinger and rod grip while the rod is thrust back and forth, as one does in bait casting, but the line is released from the finger *after* the forward drive of the rod has been completed. This point of release is a slight variation from plugging, and a requisite for spinning accuracy.

A number of spinning reels have been designed but their general appearance and casting principle is the same. The reel's spool is positioned parallel to the rod and remains stationary during the cast and retrieve. A metal finger picks up the line after a cast is made, and by turning on the circumference of the spool as the angler reels in, the line is laid back for the next cast. It is replaced evenly by means of a shuttling spool which "pumps" back and forth as the reel handle is turned. The minimum useful gear-ratio is three-to-one, or three complete turns of the pick-up finger to one turn of the reel handle. The necessity for a multiplying action is obvious—considering the fragility of the rod and line—the reel must offer a maximum control.

To understand spinning and its place in the stream requires a knowledge of its advantages: (1) By using an almost invisible monofilament line or fine braided nylon, you can beat the problem of surface disturbance that fly casting often creates in low, clear water. (2) A very light lure can be cast from a position where you'd ordinarily have no room for a back-cast if using a fly-rod outfit. (3) Small lures can be sunk deep in fast water—a fly line, being buoyed up by its special finish, tends to drag along the surface. (4) Beginners can master its operation in a few minutes without danger of backlashes. (5) It is easy to reach tough pockets on the opposite bank with lures too light for ordinary gear. (6) It is possible to use tackle as light as, if not lighter than, fly-rod gear of equal ability.

Ultra light spoons, plugs, and artificial minnows have always been seducers of big fish, but until the advent of spinning only a few expert bait-casters could handle such lightweight lures. Spinning reels are now built with an automatic clutch which releases line when fish pull against it in excess of the strength of the line. Because of it, the use of two- or three-pound test line is practical for fish from five to eight pounds. Europeans have chalked up a record of a 40-pound Atlantic salmon on a six-pound test line and Americans—a 28-pound chinook salmon on a four-pound test line.

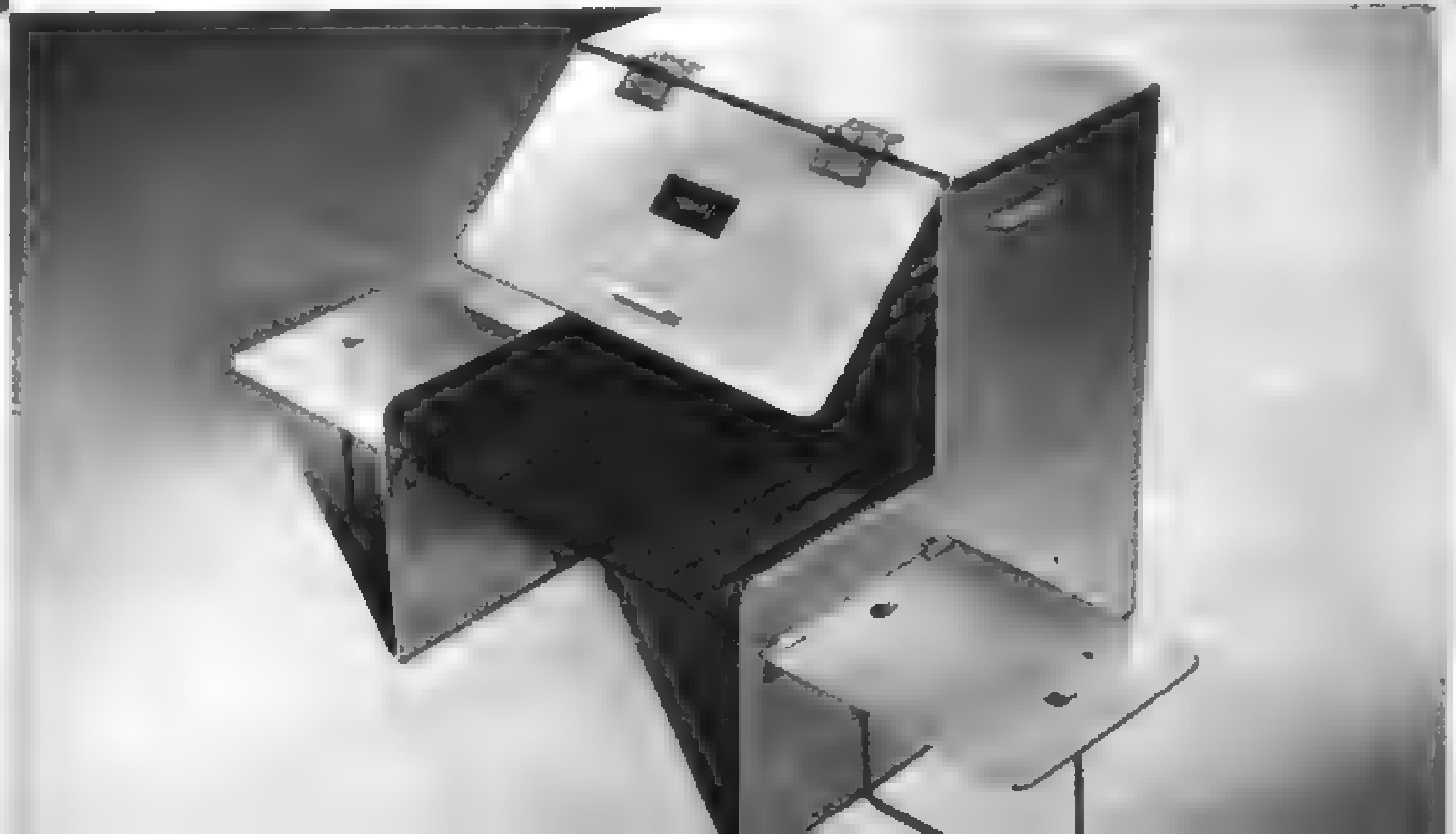


NEW ANGLES FOR Anglers

Here's a pocket stove
that, when folded between
its own side walls,
is only 4 x 5 x 2
inches. It operates
on vaporized gasoline, burns
for one and a half hours.

Punch holes in these cans
and in twelve minutes you have
piping hot food in the inside can.
The water repellent will
help keep your clothing dry
and the insect repellent
keeps insects away.

For more elaborate
cooking in the
open, this collapsible stove will
broil, bake or roast.
Build a fire on the ground and when it's
glowing, place the stove on top.



To measure your catch and
weigh it in, use this portable
scales and measuring tape.
The chemical
cigarette lighter is
foolproof in the wind.
Below, the insulated food
carrier keeps 2¼
gallons hot or cold for hours.

ESQUIRE'S 10 GREAT FISH RECIPES

Good fish cookery is basically simple. Go into any of the great fish restaurants in the country and you will find that they have two things in common. A simple menu first of all. There will be seafood cocktails, chowders and stews, a few specialties of the house and a long list of fish—and these will be principally *broiled.* Secondly, they are usually served with french fried potatoes (and these are raw-fried) and a big green salad, pie (it is apple as a rule) and good hot coffee for dessert. One more bit of advice—make sure your fish is fresh. The color should be bright and the flesh firm.

Broiling—Almost all fish are best broiled. Small ones (such as trout) can be broiled whole, medium fish split and large ones (cod, swordfish, salmon) cut into steaks. They should be cooked under a high, dry flame which approximates as closely as possible outdoor charcoal broiling. Brush with melted butter (or olive oil if you prefer), season with salt and pepper. And let the fire do the browning—don't use paprika.

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Sautéing—This is very much the same and some people prefer it to broiling. Dry the fish and dip lightly in flour on both sides. (As the flour is used only to prevent it sticking to the pan, make sure the fish is well dried and the flour coating light.) Don't sauté mackerel or bluefish—they are too oily already and should be broiled.

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Frying—There are those who think that there is nothing like a fish fry. This should be done in deep, hot fat. Beforehand, dip it in egg or combination of egg and milk and roll in flour, corn meal, cracker crumbs or, for something different, try using a prepared waffle-mix batter. Seasoning to taste should be added to whatever batter you use. Place in deep-frying basket and plunge into hot fat. Cook five or six minutes, drain on brown paper and serve.

Fish Chowder—To start your stew, get a filleted fish but take the bones home, wrap in cheese cloth along with some celery tops, carrots, a bay leaf, salt and pepper and bring to a boil. In the meantime partially render one quarter pound of salt pork (or use butter if you prefer). Add three chopped onions and cook until limp. *Do not let the pork (or butter) and the onions become brown.* Remove the bones from the broth and add one pound and a half of potatoes, either diced or sliced, and a cup of chopped celery. Cook until soft. Add three tablespoons of flour to the onions in the pan, *but do not let this brown.* Then add your fish to the pot (figure on a quarter pound per person), the mixture from the pan and scalded milk to equal the amount of fish broth, bring it just below a boil and serve with pilot crackers. Any number of fish may be used as a base; some like cod, some haddock or halibut, but you can use practically any fish you might catch except for the oily ones.

Trout à la Izaak Walton—"Take your trout . . . and having taken out his guts . . . wipe him very clean within but wash him not; and give him three scotches with a knife . . . on one side only. . . . Take a clean kettle, and put in . . . hard stale beer (but it must not be dead), vinegar . . . white wine, and water . . . (add) salt, the rind of a lemon, a handsome fagot of rosemary, thyme, and winter savory. . . . Whilst your fish is boiling beat up the butter for your sauce with a ladleful or two of the liquor . . . and being laid in a dish, pour your butter upon it . . . strewing it . . . over with shaved horse-radish and pounded ginger, garnish your dish . . . with sliced lemon and serve it up."
—*The Compleat Angler*

Red snapper creole—There are those who only care for eating fish when it has been dressed up with a full-bodied sauce and for them, here is a good pungent one from the South. Set a minced clove of garlic frying in one quarter cup of olive oil and one quarter cup of butter, then chop and add one half pound of onions and allow it to cook until the onions begin to brown. Add a small can of tomato paste, stir, then add one half pound of chopped celery, one half pound of chopped green or sweet red peppers, one half cup of water, Worcestershire sauce, mixed spices, salt and pepper to taste, juice of half a lemon. Last of all, add two pounds of chopped fresh or canned tomatoes. Simmer for an hour or more until the sauce has thickened, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon. Serve over the fish which has previously been broiled.

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Lemon butter—For broiled, sautéed or fried fish, whether in the kitchen or in the open, the only dressing up the dish may need is this simple sauce, which is just what the name implies. To one half cup of melted butter, add a quarter cup of lemon juice, one half teaspoon of salt and some chopped fresh parsley. When the butter's bubbling, pour on fish and serve.

Steamed finnan haddie—This is a fine way to cook this old Scotch dish (it's smoked haddock in case you've never checked) or such other fish as salmon, striped bass and cod. Use the largest pot you have in the kitchen, place a bowl of some kind in the bottom and the fish to be cooked on a plate on top of the bowl. There should be only enough water in the pot to cover the bowl, so that when you put the lid on, the fish is cooked indirectly by steam. Cook until the fish is dry and flaky in appearance and serve with lemon butter.

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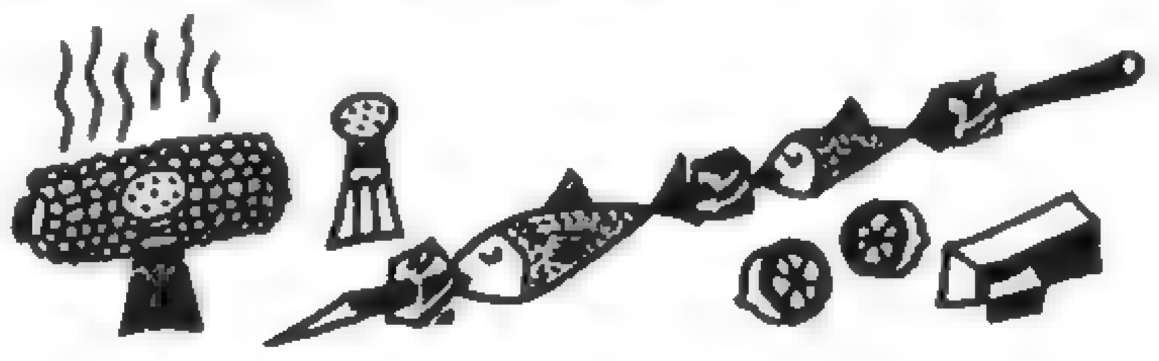
Trout Amandine—For variety in a sautéed fish, try this one. Sauté the fish (as above) and while the fish is cooking, drop one quarter cup of chopped almonds into one half cup of melted butter and brown. Just before the fish is cooked, pour the sauce over it and pop into the broiler for two minutes. It's also excellent with fillet of lemon or grey sole, flounder, red snapper or pompano.



Trout à la Brookside—The simplest way for cooking your catch where you caught them is to clean and pop them in a pan with plenty of butter. Eat with lots of lemon. What else could you ask for? Well, you could try broiling them on a skewer (which you can do with any other small pan fish as well). Clean but don't bone them. Cut yourself a long stick of green wood, sharpen the end and then alternately skewer quarter-inch cubes of bacon and fish. Season and broil over low, hot coals, constantly turning the stick. Incidentally, roast corn goes well with this one. Put unhusked corn on a grate just over hot coals, turning often, until the husks are well-charred. Remove husks and serve with butter and salt.

THE FRESH WATER Fisherman

You'll need these waders when you head into the stream for trout, the fisherman's breeches and jacket, heavy socks and wool shirt, moccasins and hat. In the center are all you could ask for in flies, bait-casting plugs, spinners, spoons and fly boxes. At upper left is a fly-tying kit, and, clockwise, fly and bait-casting rods and cases, creel, a fisherman's knife on the neckerchief, landing net, reels, reel case, line and storage rack and an assortment of line.

THE SURF Fisherman

Here, the word for comfort is "waterproof" and waterproof are the boots, hat, and nylon suit of overalls and jacket (with its carrying case). Wear a woolen shirt for warmth. At right are two surf rods and small gaff hook. Below them, a surf bag, flashlight, reel with spare spool, grease and line; a butt rest, knives and plugs. Above the rods, both left and right, are an assortment of lures, plugs, sinkers and line, a surf spike, thermos and surf bag.

THE DEEP SEA Fisherman

It's a tough fight when you're deep-sea fishing, so a lightweight jacket, polo shirt and pants are ideal. You'll need some sort of sunshade, sneakers and heavy gloves. The pennants will tell others of your luck. Resting on the swivel trolling chair are three deep-sea rods, flying gaff and rope; below them, harnesses—one, canvas, one, leather. At lower left are trolling lines and hooks, feathered jigs and sinkers; at lower right, some light to heavy reels and more lines.

FISH: Facts and Fancy

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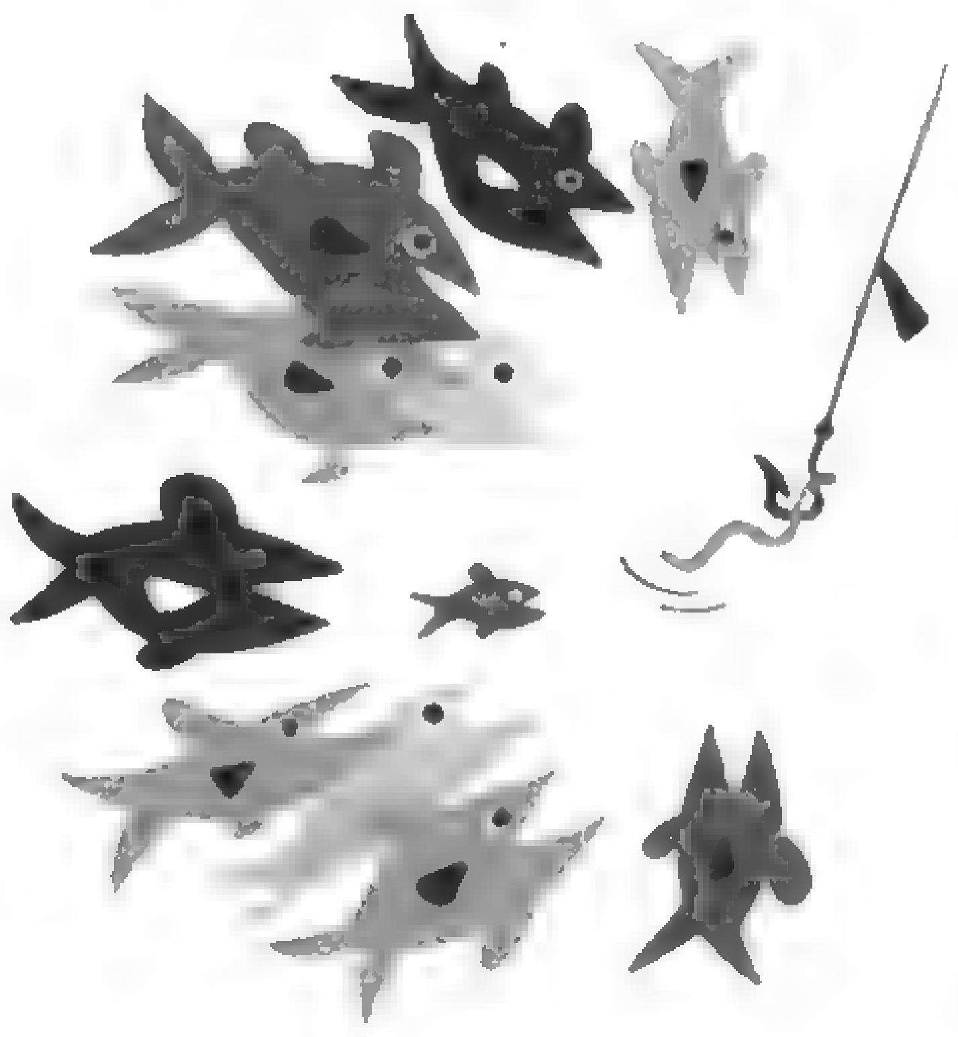
Although all of these stories are fish stories, we're not saying (because we don't know) just how tall some of them are, but anyway, here we go. There was one fisherman that liked to give every fish a sporting chance. Working in a factory that made doll's eyelashes out of nylon that was only 2½ thousandths of an inch in diameter, he had a fish line made of it, asked a laboratory technician to thread it onto the smallest of fish hooks (a No. 28), under a microscope. First time he fished with the delicate apparatus, he hauled in a three-pound flounder. Well, *that* story's true but it certainly hangs by a hair.

Of course, every angler has his own stories about the fish that got away, but Arizona fishermen tell of a fishing *stream* that got away. The Arizona State Game Department reported (with an apparently straight face) that a mile and a quarter of Horton Creek—the best fishing stretch on the river—had suddenly seeped into the alluvial bed and disappeared. Now, jealous fishermen wonder what happened to the fish left high and dry on the alluvial bed.

The day was saved—or at least a 500-pound tuna was saved—for a quick-thinking fisherman who hooked the giant fish off the Long Island shore at Freeport. He played it for some time and as the fish weakened and the battle waned, the canny fisherman pulled the tuna alongside the boat. As he did so, his line became fouled around the boat's propeller shaft. In less time than it takes a spinner of fish yarns to tell it, he cut the line above the propeller, tied it to the line below, cut the line free below the propeller and landed the whopping tuna on the knotted line.



Members of the old Huck Finn school of fishing who depend on digging worms in the garden for bait have been looking for some way to enliven the almost impossibly sluggish night crawler. One Chicago physician hit upon what seemed to be a real new wriggle for the worms. He dropped them in a glass of water in which a benzedrine pill had been soaked. By the time the baited hook hit the water, the worm was doing a wanton wiggle for the first fish that came along.

There are as many fishermen in the world as there are fish stories, but it isn't very often that you hear of a dog that's tried it. At any rate, there was one water spaniel who, taking the name of his breed seriously, covered its name with glory. Sitting up in the bow of his master's boat one day, he saw his master's rod fall in the water. He jumped in, grabbed the rod just as it started to sink in the water. As he swam towards the shore, a passing pickerel struck his lure. The dog, who had been fishing with his master many times, alternately tugged and rested, slowly heading for shore. He played the fish for fifteen minutes (so the story goes), got the upper hand and beached the fish—a four-and-a-half pounder.

We don't know whether it was intentional or not, but there is at least one fisherman in North Carolina who tried hunting with his fishing rod. One day he was quietly fishing and contemplating his catch when a four-pound jack pike struck his lure. He reeled it in, removed the hook, made another cast as a mallard duck flew by. He snagged the bird, reeled it in, had both fish and fowl for dinner.

A man from up north was fishing the waters of an Alabama stream with no luck. He noticed a nearby native hauling in one after another; he decided to ask him what he was using for bait. The native said "Well—it's this way. I just spike my pail with a little of my own corn liquor." Whereupon he baited the northerner's hook with one of his minnows and walked away. The fisherman made a cast and, sure enough, he soon got a heavy strike. After a half hour fight he pulled in a 15-pound bass, but, to his great surprise, the fish hadn't taken the bait; the "corn-fed" minnow had grabbed the bass by the back of his neck.

Fly and bait casting fishermen not only like to fish; they also take great pride in the length and accuracy of their casts, meet each year to find new champions and break the previous records. Earl Osten of Corona del Mar, California, smashed the world's record last year by casting the ⅝ths-oz. distance plug 420 feet. That's standing behind the goal posts on a football field and casting the plug well over the other goal posts! For accuracy, only one man has ever turned in a perfect score at dry fly casting. In 1932 Frank Steel of Chicago laid his ten perfect casts into the 30-inch floating ring target at a distance of 60 feet.

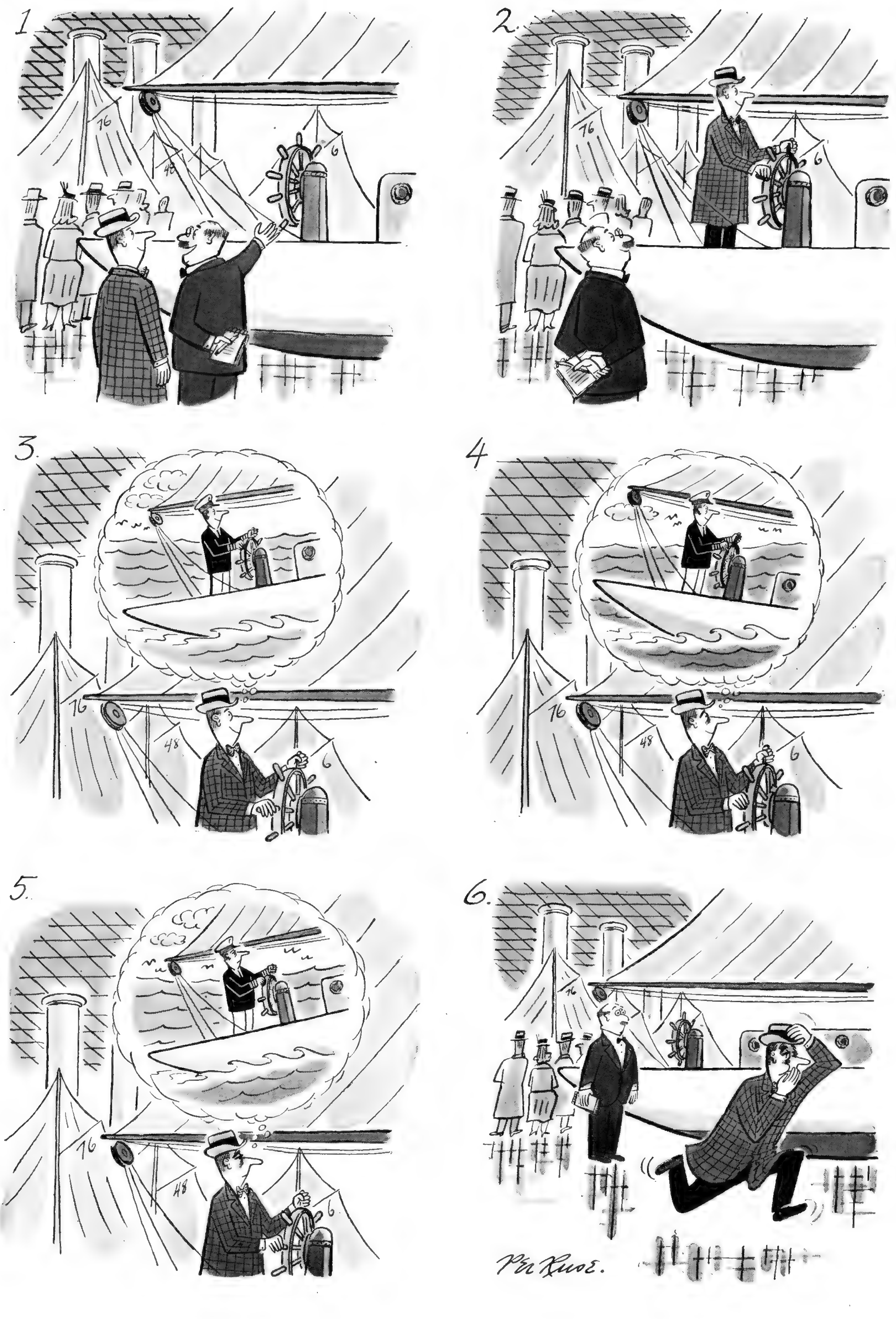
In a Worcestershire, England, cemetery, a tombstone erected to the memory of a trout bears this inscription: In memory of the old fish—under the soil the old fish do lie—20 years he lived and then did die—He was so tame you understand—He would come and eat out of our hand—Died April the 20th, 1835, aged 20 years.

One Wisconsin fisherman was so proud of a 21¾-pound muskellunge he had caught, he decided to have it mounted. The taxidermist on opening the fish discovered a perfectly good 12-ounce bottle of beer inside—which made the net weight of the fish—21 pounds.

One skeptical fisherman, who never believed any of the stories he heard about the fish others caught, caught one himself that was so big he didn't believe it and threw it back.

Unless you want to go home and tell another fish story, there's very little that can be done about the fish that gets away—unless another fisherman hooks him too. Well, one fisherman, still-fishing in the Adirondacks, hooked a fine-looking small-mouth bass but before he could get it in the boat, the line snapped and the fish got away. Within a matter of minutes a nearby fisherman had a strike and landed a whopping bass. To his amazement he found he hadn't hooked the fish but that he had snagged his hook on the snell of the fisherman who had caught the bass in the first place.

Esquire wishes to express its appreciation to the following for their assistance in the preparation of the fishing section: Angler's Roost and Abercrombie & Fitch, both in New York City, for equipment on lower part of Page 8 and on Pages 10 and 11; Gloucester House, New York City, for recipes, Page 9; and Mr. Harry Chesler, Jr. for some of the anecdotal material, Page 12. Photographs by Esquire Studio.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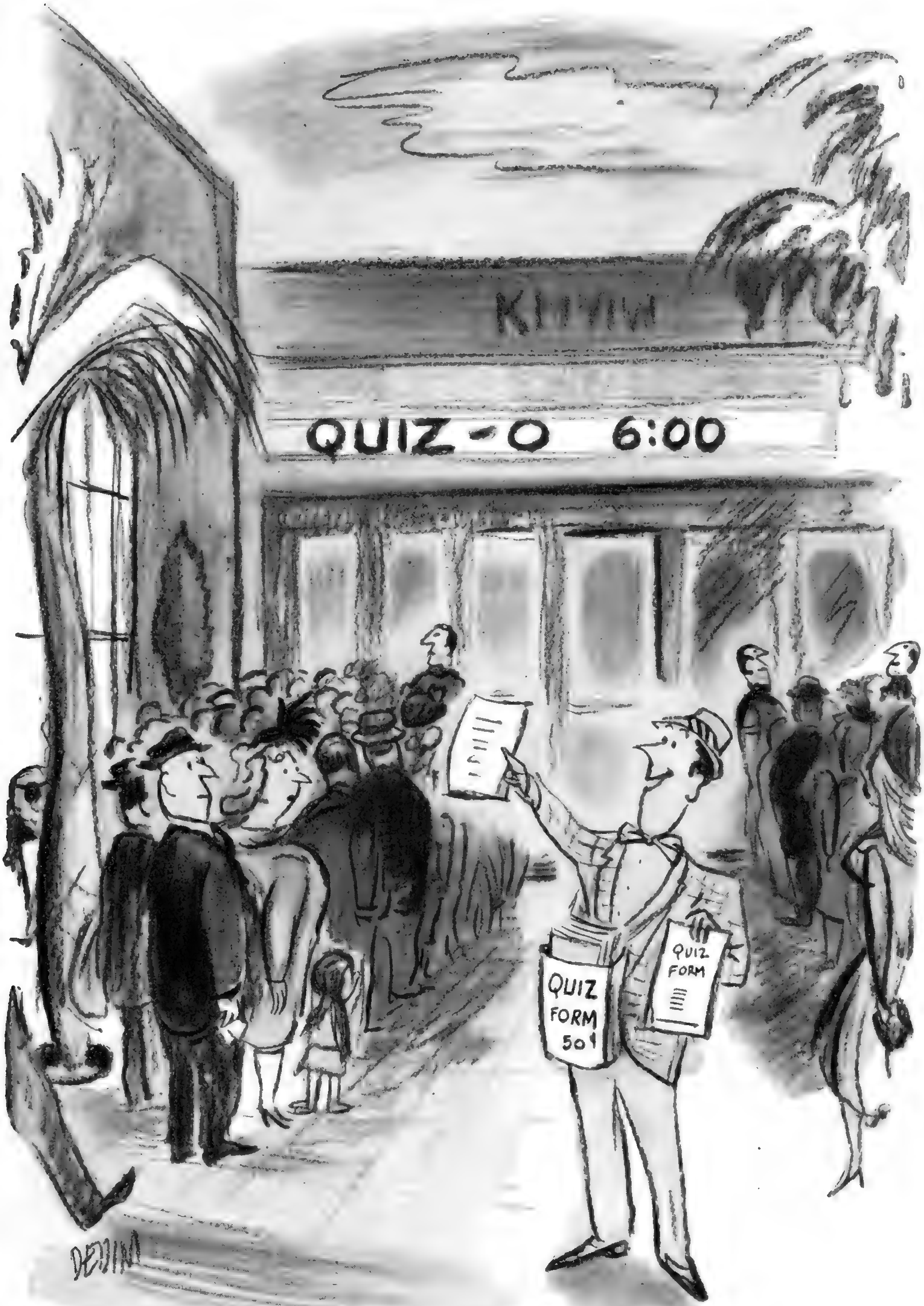
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"Win those refrigerators! Be prepared and pick the right answers!"

Where Are the Postwar Novels?

Continued from page 74

ing desperately to remember all the terrible things he had done. After ticking off a fair-sized list, he had grown silent, his head low on his chest. Suddenly he looked up. "Oh, yes," he said, sadly. "I committed adultery, the night before last."

Without a second's hesitation, the publishers' man leaped in with a comeback. "And what'll it be tonight?" he asked. "Graven images?"

This story seems pertinent because most of the books that have appeared recently deal in large measure with both adultery and the wholesale manufacture of graven images—and with the breaking of most of the other commandments. Certainly this is nothing new; people in books have been coveting each other's wives, taking the name of the Lord in vain, and behaving badly in general since long before Anthony Trollope. But what makes it significant right now is that none of this sin seems particularly to reflect what's going on in the mind of modern man. It is presented, as it were, almost entirely for its own sake, and it is important only to the characters involved in it. It tells us nothing; we draw no conclusions, and we achieve no deeper understanding of our time from it.

A good case in point is offered by a trio of 1948 books: *That Winter*, by Merle Miller; *The Great Ones*, by Ralph Ingersoll; and *The Gilded Hearse*, by Charles O. Gorham. Each has to do, in whole or in part, with the publishing business in New York, and in each the characters are engaged in breaking commandments in a manner that would have put the Saturnalia to shame.

The Gilded Hearse, which a society bent on protecting public morality attempted, for a time, to have banned in New York, deals with a single day in the life of a young publicity man for a book-publishing firm: a day in which he becomes both an adulterer and a cuckold, gets drunk, is embroiled in a couple of fights, tells a lot of lies, and sells out his principles. Someday . . .

The Great Ones takes in more territory and takes up more time. It has to do with the lives and loves of two Very Important (Ingersoll's phrase, not mine) People who are top figures in the magazine world. There is a lot about the magazine business in this one, including one whole chapter written with all the charm of a tax return.

That Winter gets into the office of a national weekly—by the side door. It concerns a talented lad from Iowa who works for something he calls "the magazine," and what befell him and his two pals in New York the winter after the war. What befell them was that all three drank and slept around with various women and drank and wondered and drank, and finally took off: two by passenger conveyance, one by suicide.

Now, it must be admitted that writers, publishers, and—yes—even publicity men are important, perhaps Very Important, people. But are they typical? Are they representative, as, for example, Amory Blaine in *This Side of Paradise* was? I for one doubt it. Looking at it generously, the message communicated by Miller, Ingersoll and Gorham actually doesn't amount to much more than this: it takes a lot of drinking, fornicating, and skulduggery to get along in this publishing game. What significance this has for people in South Dakota, say, or in New Mexico, it's difficult to see. Miller, whose book is by all odds the best of the three, comes closest to saying something of general value when he points out that many a young man can, like his protagonist, get himself in a hell of a mess if he loses sight of his ideals. But that idea is neither particularly profound nor particularly fresh.

It's probably nasty of me, but something ought to be said about the writing in these three books. Ingersoll's is written in a style reminiscent of his earlier work of reportage, *The Battle Is the Payoff*: it lacks depth and color, and, accordingly, the characters emerge in just one dimension. Miller is the victim of his own readability. While his dialogue isn't bad, his narrative zooms along at such a jet-propelled pace that he can give the reader only fleeting glimpses of his people. Gorham's writing is better, but it's rather affected and pseudosophisticated; and in his book, too, the swiftness tends to blur the picture.

All three of the foregoing could take lessons in style from young (twenty-four years old) Truman Capote, the languid lad on the lounge. Capote's picture, as presented by Random House on the jacket of his first novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, gives the impression that he is all eyes—a forlorn sea sprite snatched suddenly from the deep by Bennett Cerf and the rest of the Random House editorial staff. But beneath those limpid eyes lurks writing talent which, while precious, is still promising—unless Mr. Cerf and his fellow fishers manage to destroy it, as so many publishers do to so many young writers.

Capote's story of a young boy bidding farewell to his childhood on an evil estate in the dying South is Faulknerian sometimes, Jamesian at others. It is by far the most important first novel published in 1948. But here again the question must be asked: Is Capote talking about us, as we exist in America today, or is he merely touching some tangential aspects of our life? After all, he isn't much more than a child, writing chiefly about a child—and a sick child at that. If he is telling us that we're all sick and don't know it, he should make himself clearer: if he's not, if he's just writing about sickness as such, he can be no more interesting than a hospital superintendent's kid staring at the patients on the porch.

A similar objection arises in the case of Gore Vidal, Capote's rival for the title of Youngest Novelist. (Capote is reported to have declared that he knows for a *fact* Vidal is not a day under twenty-five. Both would probably be surprised to know that Elmer Grossberg, whose second novel is due fairly soon, had his first published four years ago, when he was eighteen. If all this goes on, we probably can expect future book jackets to show pictures of incubator babies scrawling away at manuscripts.)

Vidal has produced three entries in the sweepstakes: *Williwaw*, about servicemen in the Aleutians; *In a Yellow Wood*, about a young man "at the crossroads of his life"; and, last year, *The City and the Pillar*. The new one is a study of a homosexual, and its terrain ranges from Virginia to Hollywood to Mexico to, inevitably, New York. Where Capote excels, Vidal falls far, far behind. He seems to have absolutely no respect for writing as craft, and his books sound as though he fell asleep in every English class he ever attended. But that is a minor objection. If the activities of writers in New York are not clear reflections of our contemporary life, neither are the shenanigans of the fictional Homintern (as someone has called the weak-wristed young men). Vidal has given us an elaborately detailed picture of their world, but he hasn't said anything that Thomas Mann didn't say better in *Death in Venice*.

The man who wants to keep abreast of current books probably should read all the above-mentioned selections; chances are that he'll find them entertaining enough. It's doubtful, however, if he will be re-reading them twenty years from now. Therein lies the depressing fact. Yet, depressing as it is, the picture isn't wholly drab. There are still many writers yet to be heard from, including some who already have begun to build their reputations.

There is, for example, a completely original man named Eli Waldron, whose tales have appeared in many of the large-circulation magazines and in such little periodicals as *Kenyon Review*. There is Marc Brandel, whose first book, *Rain Before Seven*, marked the emergence of a genuine talent. There is George Hemphill, a young instructor at the University of Minnesota, who has published several fine short stories and some impressive poetry. There is John Ryan, who served a long period of apprenticeship in the religious magazines and recently has begun to publish in the secular ones. And there are the two J's: J. F. Powers, whose recent short-story collection, *Prince of Darkness*, delighted the critics: and J. D. Salinger, a man whose ear for dialogue excels that of John O'Hara. All the above, with the exception of Hemphill, are expected to publish novels soon. Possibly, one of them will be The Postwar Novelist. Or, possibly, the crown may go to some as-yet-unheard-of writer, far from the publishing centers, who even now may be tapping away at something that will set the country's readers on their ears. Wherever this new genius is, and whoever he is, there'll certainly be room for him when he comes. With American fiction in the shape it's in right now, he can't get here too soon. ⌗

"Why can't I just practice on the piano like other kids, Dad?"

The Devil and Lady Godiva

Continued from page 42

you." Of course, whether I rode through Coventry as Lady Godiva, or Lady Godiva herself did, it would be as embarrassing for Leofric, but that wasn't my concern.

"I haven't the least idea how you'll manage this," said Leofric. "But you have an honest face. I'll trust you." He gave me a smile of childlike confidence.

Everything was set now. Neither Leofric nor his wife would give in. I only had to sit tight.

A few days later, Lady Godiva caused it to be proclaimed in the town of Coventry that she would ride naked down the main street, covered only by her long golden hair, at three o'clock on the afternoon of the following Sunday. I have to give Godiva credit for this clever touch. Such a ride would be twice as shocking on the Sabbath as on a weekday.

I visited her again as soon as the proclamation was read. "I didn't think Leofric would be so stubborn, my lady," I said, "but you have nothing to worry about."

"Am I really going to get a new dress?" she said.

"Of course. Now on Sunday afternoon, start out from the castle as if you actually intended to ride through Coventry. A few hundred yards outside the village gates, I'll meet you and take your place as Lady Godiva. You can hide in the woods till it's over."

"You won't fail me, will you? Because once I started out, I'd have to go through with it, and that would be perfectly dreadful!"

"How could I think of it?" I said. "After my ride through Coventry, public opinion will force Leofric to start oppressing peasants twenty-four hours a day to give you a new dress."

The part I was to play in this little charade worried me. I am a modest fellow, and the more I thought about it, the more the idea of riding *au naturel* past the peasants repelled me. Of course, I was to be disguised as a woman, but that didn't alter the essential point to a person of my fastidious nature. The thought of those vulgar stares appalled me. I feared that for once I had bitten off more than I could conveniently chew.

But not for long. Pretty soon I had an idea, and I proceeded to put it into operation at once. I assumed my peasant disguise, went down to Coventry, and hired a small boy to beat a drum in the main square. When a crowd had gathered, I addressed them. I announced myself as a fellow citizen who had something important to tell them. They had all heard, I said, the proclamation of Lady Godiva's ride. Here I was interrupted by gleeful shouts, which I silenced with a look.

Perhaps, I said, they were ignorant of the reason for this ride: I explained that Leofric had resolved to oppress the peasants with a heavy tax. At this point the mob seemed incredulous, so I repeated my statement until they were convinced. I said they must know that Lady Godiva was against such a tax and had pleaded for the peasants on bended knee. The crowd heard this rather skeptically, too, but such was my eloquence that they soon accepted it. I declared that the only consideration on which the earl would change his mind was that his wife should ride naked through Coventry, covered only by her long golden hair. (This—such is the irony of Fate—is how the vulgar version of Godiva's story became current.) I concluded by saying that the only honorable course for all true Coventrymen was to turn their backs as Lady Godiva rode by. The crowd was so stirred by now that this suggestion was received with loud cheers, and I knew my point had been carried. The mob dispersed, fired with a noble resolve to spare Godiva's modesty. I hoped they would keep this resolution. I felt, even more after I had seen the crowd, how unpleasant it would be to have them staring at me.

That's about all there is to the story. On the following Sunday, things went off almost without a hitch. After that the earl forsook gardening for good honest oppression, Godiva got her dress, and in due course I collected two souls.

"You really don't mean you were strictly honest for once?" said the Disciple. "That you kept the letter, if not the spirit, of your bargain with both parties?"

"You haven't been paying attention," said the Devil. "I said '*almost* without a hitch.' The only change from our original plan was that at the last moment I lost my faith in the delicacy of the peasants and let Godiva ride, herself. It was ungallant of me, but I just couldn't outrage my modesty."

"That's more like it," said the Disciple. "For a minute you had me worried. But tell me, *did* anybody peek?"

"Only one person," said the Devil, finishing his fifth wormwood cassis, "whom posterity has dignified with the name of 'Peeping Tom.' "

"Something tells me—" said the Disciple.

"According to the vulgar version of the Godiva story," went on the Devil, ignoring the interruption, "Tom was struck blind for his indiscretion. This is untrue. I have 20-20 vision."

Lights! Camera! Action!

Continued from page 72

and sat next to the camera. Two people bawled for quiet, a slate was taken, there was a moment of intense silence, and then Gregg said calmly, "Okay, Jo. Soft and easy now, baby." Then Jo Ann began, "Oh, my darling brother . . ."

The hell with this, Denton thought. Me on the floor like a damn lap dog. And who wants to see my back? He snuggled up to Jo, turning his face sideways, so the camera got his profile. He expected Gregg to raise hell, but he didn't, and Jo kept talking.

Not a single word for me, Hal thought—three pages for her. How did she get a break like this? She's probably Gregg's girl. Only what does he want with a plain, skinny kid like this?

Denton looked up at Jo Ann for a second. The clear-eyed tramp, he thought. She got ten hours of shut-eye last night and she's all set for this. She looks a little like Madge. Wonder where Madge is now? Probably back in Ohio, married and happy. And Georgia, Dolly, Esther, Frances, Ann? And all those that were merely "Babe" and "Honey"? That's the trouble—when you know too many girls, they all become a blur. Oh, why don't I kill myself and be done with it? This kid probably *really* thinks I'm a big shot because I've been top fly on the pile all these years. Yet I've never been happy.

That silly smile of mine attracts them like a mink coat. And it lasts for an hour, a week, a month—a year with that big blonde. She was a good kid. They were all good kids—even the society babes. And here I am over fifty and never even had any children or a real home. Only three yachts, about a hundred cars, houses, enough clothes to start a store—and I guess I've sent a dozen barrels of booze rushing through my rotten guts. But what real happiness have I ever known.

Denton watched Jo's heavy lips as she spoke. She suddenly looked down and smiled a small, almost hurt smile. He looked away. What timing she has, he thought. She's a pretty kid, a clean-cut type. Who am I to call her a tramp? This kid's a real actress and I'm a drunken ham. She doesn't get by because she has a silly grin. No, she has *it*, the real thing. And without my grin, I'd be selling shoes. And maybe better off. Me, an old tired rumdum, wearing a girdle that's cutting my butt, and I can't have a decent thought about a sweet kid. If I'd been a shoe clerk I'd have been happier—have some swell kids, a loving wife, a real life. Nobody ever gave a blast in hell about me, except my mother, God rest her soul . . . And that lawsuit! My own mother having to sue me for support!

Tears filled Denton's eyes. He brushed them away with a careless movement of his hand and held Jo tighter. Suddenly he found himself staring at the smooth skin of her shoulders. He had pushed his face up over her bodice.

Well! he thought. She is lovely. That's all real—no padding on her. The poor, beautiful darling. She's a green kid, a wonderful girl, impressed by my name. She really meant that stuff about having a crush on me. If I made a play for her and gave her a fast line, I—

Gregg yelled, "Cut!"

Denton fell back, turned, and looked at the director. Okay, I messed it up, he thought. Gregg'll bawl the living hell out of me.

Gregg was staring at Denton, his big face puzzled. Then he turned to the cameraman and asked, "Okay for you?"

"Just fine for me, Mr. Hanson."

Gregg looked over at the sound man. "Smack on the nose, Gregg," the sound man said.

Gregg said loudly, "Print that."

Denton stood up and helped Miss Worth to her feet. She looked tired. "My dear, you were great—every inch an actress."

"Thank you, Mr. Denton."

Gregg came over. "That was terrific—and I'm not one of those goons that use the word loosely. It was so good I'm not taking a protecting shot; we'll never recapture the delicate feeling, the wonderful mood. Not even going to make any close-ups. I wouldn't touch the scene, it was that good. Swell job, Jo."

She said thank you and went to her dressing room.

For a moment Denton watched the sway of her young body as she walked; then he turned to Gregg.

"I ought to get at least one close-up. I didn't have a line—had to sit there like a bump."

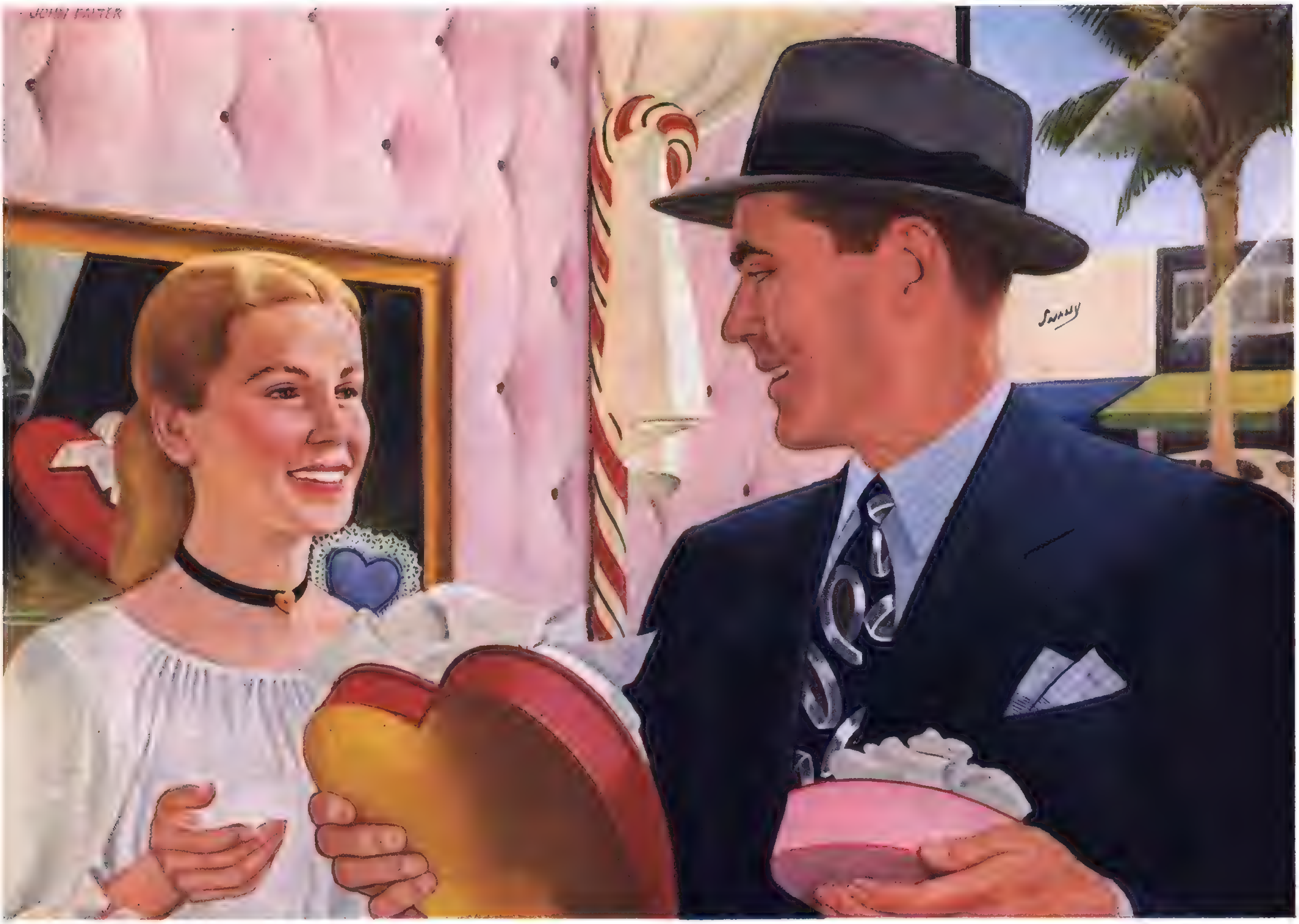
"Hal," Gregg said, "you amaze me. I was going to stop it when you turned your puss toward the camera. Glad I didn't. You turned in one of the finest performances I've ever had the pleasure of seeing. And without saying a word! The critics will slobber over you, and even the front office will go for you. Frankly, I take my hat off to you: you're an actor."

This punk is kidding me, Denton thought, building up to something.

"Your face said more than any dialogue could," Gregg went on. "The whole gantlet of life's emotions was registered on your face. First anger—that your little sister was throwing her life away. Then sadness and remorse, as if you were to blame—the right amount of pity and tenderness. Those few tears were a master stroke. You could have overdone it so easily. And at the end—well, you were truly magnificent . . . that faint flash of hope and understanding, almost joy for your sister's great courage. Hal, that was sheer genius."

"Thank you, Gregg," Denton said. He ran his hand over his forehead, a weary, hammy gesture. "See you after lunch. Took a lot out of me."

He slapped Gregg on the shoulder, then started for Miss Worth's dressing room.



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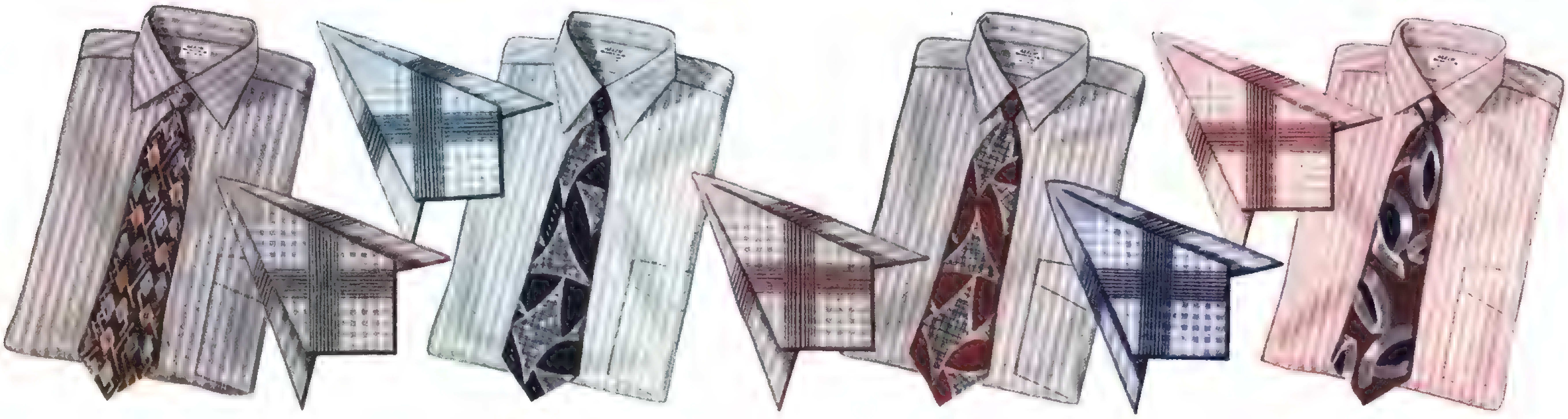

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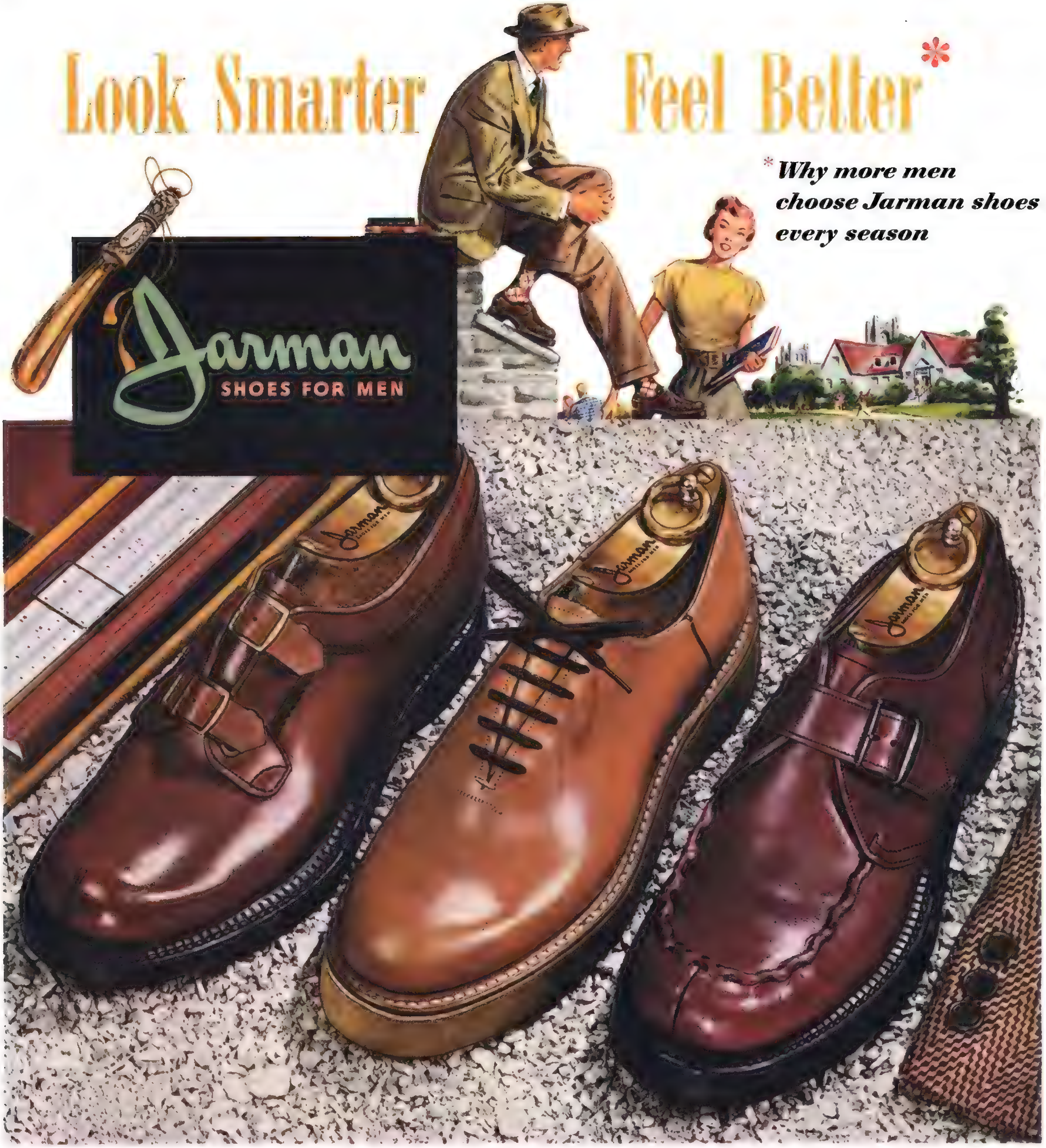

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The Timid Angel

Continued from page 51

Mort D'Angel!" He sat slim and straight, the gaping holes in his black coat mute evidence of the truth of his statement. He looked over the heads of the still crowd and repeated what he had just said, in Spanish. Then he headed for the mountains and was, at last, out of sight.

Edgar moved back into the barbershop and sat down in the chair, weakly. The heat, the sun, the filth, the violence were bad; but this strange fight that hadn't been a fight at all made him sick.

Jonathan Gault elbowed his way through the crowd, his huge spurs jingling in the dust, and picked up Streeter's gun. He looked at the gun carefully; then, carefully, he fired at the sign that swung above the Oroport. The sign swung wildly, a large new hole in its tattered planking.

Gresham Greeley came out of his saloon, looked at the sign, and spoke briefly to Jonathan. Gault handed him the gun and came across the street into the barbershop. "What really happened, Pete?" he asked. "You always see everything."

Pete Biggs said, his voice strained, "What they tell you happened?"

"Said an argument broke out in the Oroport between the little man in black and a fellow been around a few days they called Streeter. Said they went out in the street, and the big man shot the little one twice from ten feet, in the chest."

"That's right," Pete said. "They told you true."

"Nobody ever saw the little man before. Said the bullets either went in him or missed him or through him or something."

"They tear his clothes," Pete said, "heart-high."

"And didn't hurt him?"

"You see him layin' out in the road?" Pete asked.

Jonathan Gault turned his contemptuous eyes to Edgar. "And you saw that, too?" he said.

Edgar said slowly, "Yes, I saw it, too."

Gault shrugged. "No one hurt, I guess. Nothing for the Committee." He grinned and added, "Found your land yet?"

"No," Edgar said. He started to add something else, but Gault walked from the shop.

"Funny thing," Pete Biggs said, musingly. "Lose a patch of ground the size of Philadelphia." He picked up the shears again. "You be goin' back there?"

Edgar said grimly, "I don't know."

Pete grinned with a sudden remembrance. "Seem a shame for a shot like you be goin' back to Philadelphia."

Edgar laughed without humor; that was the only amusing thing he had found in the West. He had expected every man to carry two guns and to be able to shoot the spots out of the deuce of hearts at fifty paces. What he'd found was that the men out here had all they could do to handle one gun, and any marksmanship beyond point-blank range was largely luck. There were exceptions, of course. But it seemed to be the custom in personal combat to come upon your antagonist from the rear, or to let him have it from six feet or so.

Edgar Tutwiler had belonged to the Rod and Gun Club at home. And one day, not long ago, he had hit a whiskey bottle thrown into the air while testing a dueling pistol that Pete had picked up as a curio. As a result of Pete's gossiping, he had achieved a fabulous reputation overnight. Diverted by the picture that Pete had created of him, he had never had the heart to spoil it by mentioning that, on the only occasion he had ever gone hunting, the appearance of a living thing in his sights had given him a case of buck fever so bad that he had been unable to pull the trigger.

The sun was throwing long shadows down Commercial Street and the town was coming to violent life as Edgar left Pete's shop. He was vastly refreshed by Pete's ministrations, and, stepping into the street, he felt the beginning of the coolness that would be complete after the sun had set. Tonight, Candace Forest was having a party, and he reflected with pleasure on the good things there would be to eat.

That thought increased Edgar's good humor to the point where he could actually nod pleasantly to the barkeep in the Bella Union as he passed down the open courtyard to what the management called his room. The horses in the corral behind the hotel went into their usual simulated panic and kicked up the usual cloud of choking dust when he opened his door. He took off his heavy gun and belt with relief and hung them on the wall. He had bought and carried the gun as a concession to local custom—Pete Biggs said it would discourage footpads. But he wouldn't wear it to a party.

It took him an hour to get ready and half an hour to walk the mile to Major Forest's house. Candace said at the door, "Mr. Tutwiler! I was beginning to think you'd forgotten us."

He quelled his shyness and began a carefully rehearsed speech. "Hardly," he said. "As well expect the desert wayfarer to forget the oasis he has—"

Jonathan Gault appeared at Candace's side. Edgar stammered to a halt. Gault's short jacket was stiff with beadwork and silver embroidery, and his wide-bottomed charro pants were plain black except for a thin line of silver down the side. He was wearing a big, white-handled gun. Edgar's well-cut eastern clothes looked drab in comparison.

"Excuse me," Jonathan said. "May I speak to you a moment, Candy?"

Edgar moved away, spoke to one or two of the other guests, and then to Candace's father, Major Forest, who was a prosperous vintner. Major Forest kept him pinned against the wall for five minutes, while Candace, wandering about among her guests, threw him an occasional teasing smile.

Finally he broke away and took her by the arm. He didn't look back, forward, to right or left; he guided her into the big patio and out into the cool grey moonlight. He said, "Candace, are you engaged to Jonathan Gault?" He said it fast while he had his courage up.

"No," she said, gravely. "We—"

She may have been going to say something else, but Edgar Tutwiler took her in his arms, quickly and roughly, and kissed her. Far off, a dog barked, but Edgar didn't hear. He heard his own heart. He heard the heart of Candace Forest. He felt her breasts against his chest, and her hair smelled like silk and lilacs.

The girl said, "You are very, very bold, Mr. Tutwiler."

Edgar clenched his teeth, and his voice came muffled. "I can't help myself with you. Will you go back with me? Will you marry me?"

"No," the girl said.

Three dogs barked closer, and Edgar heard them then, with a tiny, numbed portion of his mind. A dog had barked at a galloping rider, and now the rider came a little closer and the first dog was joined by two others. And when the first dog had grown bored with his senseless baying, three fresh dogs, nearer, took up the cry with the two that had joined the first.

"No, I won't go away with you." She paused maddeningly. "And I won't be hurried into any decision. But I'll forgive you . . ."

The dogs were in full cry now, and above their sound came the sound of hoofs. Then a horse, hard-ridden in the dust, came running up to Major Forest's house and stopped. The music in the house stopped too.

Jonathan Gault came out onto the patio, and said in a voice that was like a rock thrown through glass, "Candy."

"Oh, boy—the freedom train at last!"

Candace called to him. "Yes?"

Jonathan Gault walked toward them, and finally he was close to them, his eyes two leaden spheres of hate. "They've raided Don Juan Rivera's lower range," he said flatly. "The Vigilance Committee's going out." He paused and looked at Edgar. "Now," he added. "We'll need you, Tutwiler." A smile showed on his lips.

Edgar smiled back, but his stomach was heavy and cold. "Oh, I hardly think so. I have no horse. No gun. And after all I'm only an Easterner."

"You're the best shot in town according to Pete Biggs," Gault said. "And we'll get you a horse and a gun."

Edgar heard Candace's voice, warm in the night. "They need *bold* men, Mr. Tutwiler, wherever they call home."

"I'll take care of you," Gault said, still smiling.

"That will hardly be necessary," Edgar said stiffly. He turned to Candace. "May I borrow a horse from your father? I'm sure he'll lend me a gun."

Sanchez, Don Juan's foreman, told of the raid. The rustlers had run off two hundred head. They'd been led by a slim man on a big grey horse.

The Vigilance Committee rode out into the night. They rode for an hour and then stopped. The men nearest Edgar made signs for silence. He listened, but, except for the sound of horses breathing and the clink of bit metal, there was nothing. Then, finally, he heard it. Thunder muted close to the realm of silence. The distant drum of hoofs on adobe.

Gault rode away and the others waited. After a time, two spaced shots came from far ahead. Then two more shots close together. Then a ragged volley—and silence. The men around Edgar spurred their horses and rode forward into the bright gloom of the moonlit night, but Edgar stayed where he was and waited, alone.

Three horsemen came through the chaparral. One of them was Gault. He was holding his gun on the two men who rode ahead of him, and Edgar realized with a strange shock that one of them was Streeter—the man who had shot at the person who called himself Mort D'Angel that afternoon.

Gault said, "I thought I'd find you back here. Take care of these two. They won't give you any trouble." He turned to the two men. "Get down."

The two men dismounted silently. Gault got down too.

"I'll tie them to be sure," he said. He cut the reins from the horses the rustlers rode, put the men back to back against a small tree, and busied himself with the leather reins.

"I'm afraid," he said, straightening up, "these are the only ones we're going to get for our trouble." He looked at them speculatively. "Don't shoot them unless you have to," he said. "We'll hang them in town, in the daylight. They'll make a pair of good object lessons, kicking in the sun with their faces going black."

He climbed on his horse and rode away.

Edgar stood back from the men, holding Major Forest's big gun pointed toward them. Nobody spoke. Edgar felt he ought to say

Continued on page 96

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something—but what was there to say? His heart pounded, not so much from fright as from a nightmarish sense that this wasn't real.

Streeter said abruptly, "How do you feel, Ab? Wrists hurt?"

"Yeah," said the other man. "He sure tied us." A short silence. Then, "It'll be a lot tighter around our necks, come sun-up."

"Yeah, that's right," said Ab.

There was another silence. Edgar felt the moisture coming through the pores of his hands.

Streeter said, "Son, roll me a smoke, will you?"

"I—can't," Edgar said finally.

"Sure you can. There's paper and dust in my pocket. I'll tell you how." Edgar didn't move. "It ain't like I could do anything to you, tied up like this," the man said.

That was true. Edgar had always heard about the last requests of condemned men. He moved forward and took the papers and sack out of the pocket of the man's grimy shirt.

"Fold the paper about a quarter way up the edge," Streeter said. "Look, son. You can't roll it with one hand. You gotta lay that gun down."

Edgar hesitated. "Hell," said the rustler, "lay the gun down, son. We're tied up tighter'n the collar on a suck-egg hound."

Edgar put the gun down carefully on the ground and bent his head to the unfamiliar task.

There was an enormous splashy explosion of blackness and he bit his tongue, where he'd had it between his lips in concentration, so that it bled. But he didn't know that. He didn't even remember hitting the ground . . .

Gault looked down at Edgar in the grey dawn. Beside him was a fat rancher named Sam Smith. "So you turned them loose?" Gault said.

Edgar felt his sore tongue quiver. "No. Of course not." He told them what had happened.

"I tied those men tight," Gault said.

Smith said, "And he had a gun."

More men rode up. Gault's pale eyes were cold. "We've never known anything about you," he said, "except what you've told us yourself. Until now. Now we know you turned two rustlers loose."

"I didn't help them," Edgar said, panic mounting in his voice. "I told you what happened."

Gault didn't answer him. "Put him up on Sam's horse," he said. Edgar rode back to town on Smith's horse, sitting behind the fat rancher, holding onto him.

When they rode down Main Street, there was a knot of men in front of the Bella Union Bar. Three dazed Mission Indians were huddled together on the lower gallery.

As he got down from the horse, Edgar heard a name he'd heard before. Mort D'Angel. The Indians had confessed that a man of that name, a man invulnerable to lead bullets, had recruited some of their number during the past weeks. But they were innocent; they had nothing to do with him.

There was an angry murmur from the crowd at this. Smith got off his horse, his attention momentarily diverted from Edgar. Edgar took two instinctive steps backward, and then suddenly realized that he was unnoticed. He turned and ran.

He ran down the side of the hotel and into his room. There were no shots, no pursuit. Apparently they were preparing to hang the Indians. He grabbed the gun from the holster on the wall and stuck it in his belt. Then he lifted the edge of the mattress to get the money he kept under it.

"Hell," Sam Smith said from the door. "I let you go a' purpose. I figured you'd hide the money them outlaws give you."

"They didn't give me any money."

Smith grinned. "Give me the money and let's get back," he said.

He stepped forward. The adobe-walled room was only six feet wide, and he wasn't more than a yard away. Edgar reached for the gun in his belt. He had to tug to get it free, and Smith laughed as his hand flashed for his own gun

There was a deafening roar, and the force of the bullet from the gun in Edgar's hand knocked Smith backward and almost completely around. He hit the side of the door facing outward, and slowly slid to an untidy heap on the dirt floor.

Edgar was at his side in two short steps. He leaned down, and, as he did so, Smith coughed once and a thick stream of bright red blood gushed out of his mouth. Edgar turned away and leaned against the door. The nausea that seemed to be lurking in his throat shook him and he retched painfully.

Finally, he stepped backward and out. He walked backward until he came to the end of the corral, then climbed through the rails.

There were shouts behind him now. He crossed the street, turned a corner, found himself on Main Street. It was empty except for a saddled horse tethered to a rail in front of a shuttered store.

He got the reins loose and jumped into the saddle. A shot sounded and he heard, for the first time in his life, the angry hum of a bullet cleaving the air near him. He grabbed the pommel with his left hand and hit the horse with the gun he still clutched in his hand. The horse bounded forward. There was another shot, another more distant whine.

Edgar slashed his horse again with the gun. Once he could gain the open, he could lose his pursuers and would be safe. The scent of dust and gunpowder was in his nose. The scent of blood and fear. Faintly, he smelled silk and lilacs. He hit the horse again.

He rode on for a mile or so until the terrain roughened and there was vegetation to hide him. Then he struck off at an angle into the chaparral, twisting and doubling among the yucca and greasewood and manzanita, and headed south. San Pedro, he remembered, was a day's ride away. He rode on in the bright dawn, and before long the sun burned through the fog and began to get hot. His broadcloth suit wasn't meant for riding, and he shucked his coat and rolled it up on the saddle in front of him.

Soon his head began to hurt, and he remembered he wasn't wearing a hat. He was going to have to find one. Before he did anything about getting food or finding a place where he could sleep for a while, he'd have to find a hat. He tried knotting the corners of his handkerchief and wearing it like a nightcap, but that was effective for only a couple of minutes. He understood, for the first time, why the high crowns of Mexican sombreros were more than just decorative: they provided an air space between the top of a man's head and the surface hit by the broiling sun.

Finally he saw a few live oaks near enough together to make shade that wouldn't keep moving with the sun, and he headed for them. In their shade, he dismounted, tied the horse to a tree, and sat down on a rock. He put his elbows on his knees, rested his chin on the heels of both hands, and dropped off to sleep immediately. He wasn't sure how long he slept before his chin slipped off his hands and he was jerked back to wakefulness. This happened several times, for, though he needed sleep badly, he didn't dare to succumb to his fatigue to the extent of lying down.

When, at last, he made himself get up and saddle the horse again, he still felt weary. But he knew he had to keep going.

He saw the square roof of a house while he was still a half mile away from it. When he got close enough, he dismounted and tied the horse and crept toward the house, taking care to keep himself screened from view. There were two horses standing by the door, and near them were three men. One of the men was Jonathan Gault; the second was someone Edgar recognized as having been of the posse the night before; and the third—a squat Mexican with a scattergun in his hand—was apparently the owner of the house.

Edgar could hear them faintly, but he couldn't make out what they were saying because they spoke in Spanish. He could follow it out well enough, though. In a few moments, Gault and his man mounted and loped off toward the south. The Mexican watched them go, then stood looking carefully around him. Finally, he went back in, closing the door behind him.

Edgar took stock of his situation. Gault was ahead of him on the road to San Pedro. It wouldn't be safe to head in that direction now—he'd be picked up at the first house he passed, and there was a good chance of encountering Gault himself. That meant he would have to avoid all traveled roads. At any other time such a prospect would have terrified him; now he didn't have time to be scared. Or maybe it was the sun. He was puzzled by the effect the sun was having on him. Then, too, he'd not eaten for twenty hours. The two most urgent things were food—and a hat.

His mind made up, he pulled the gun from his belt, moved swiftly to the door of the house, and pounded on it. There was silence inside and he pounded again. There was still no answer, so he pushed at the door—and it fell open. His heart was pounding in his throat and his body was tense with the effort to keep from showing the panic that now shook him, but the Mexican, more frightened than he, dropped his own gun and raised his hands.

Edgar, his mouth drawn in panic, but outwardly a tight-lipped killer, glanced swiftly around the place and saw what he was looking for. It was a large sombrero hanging by its chin cord to a wooden peg set in the adobe wall. Edgar moved toward it and took it down. An involuntary cry of protest came from the Mexican's lips. Real pain showed in his eyes. It was the only bright thing in the poor, puncheon-floored room, and Edgar had a moment's compassion. He jerked his tie open and off. Then he unfastened the gold studs that held his long shirt with its stiff front, and undid the collar. Silently, he handed these to the Mexican.

The Mexican looked at them wonderingly, then suddenly grinned. Edgar could speak no Spanish, and so he asked for food in English and French. Finally, the Mexican understood. He got together a pile of tortillas and handed Edgar a gourd filled with water.

When Edgar was out on his horse once more, he looked back and saw the Mexican standing, wearing the shirt and waving genially. He felt the beginnings of laughter in his throat and, doffing the big gay sombrero, he waved it.

As he rode, more comfortable now, he worked out a plan of action. Gault had figured that he would head for San Pedro and the harbor, and so Edgar gave up that idea. The only other possibility

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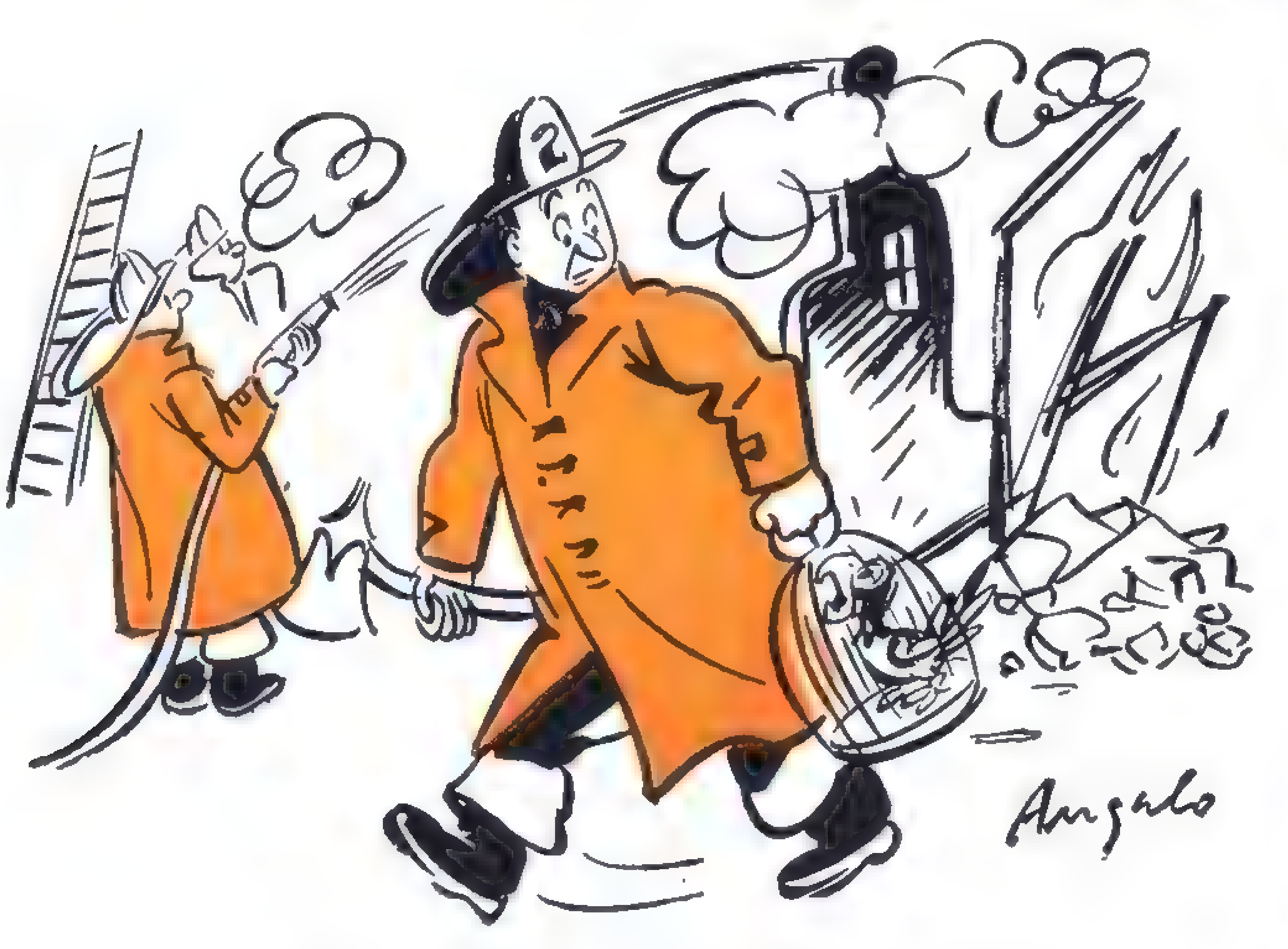

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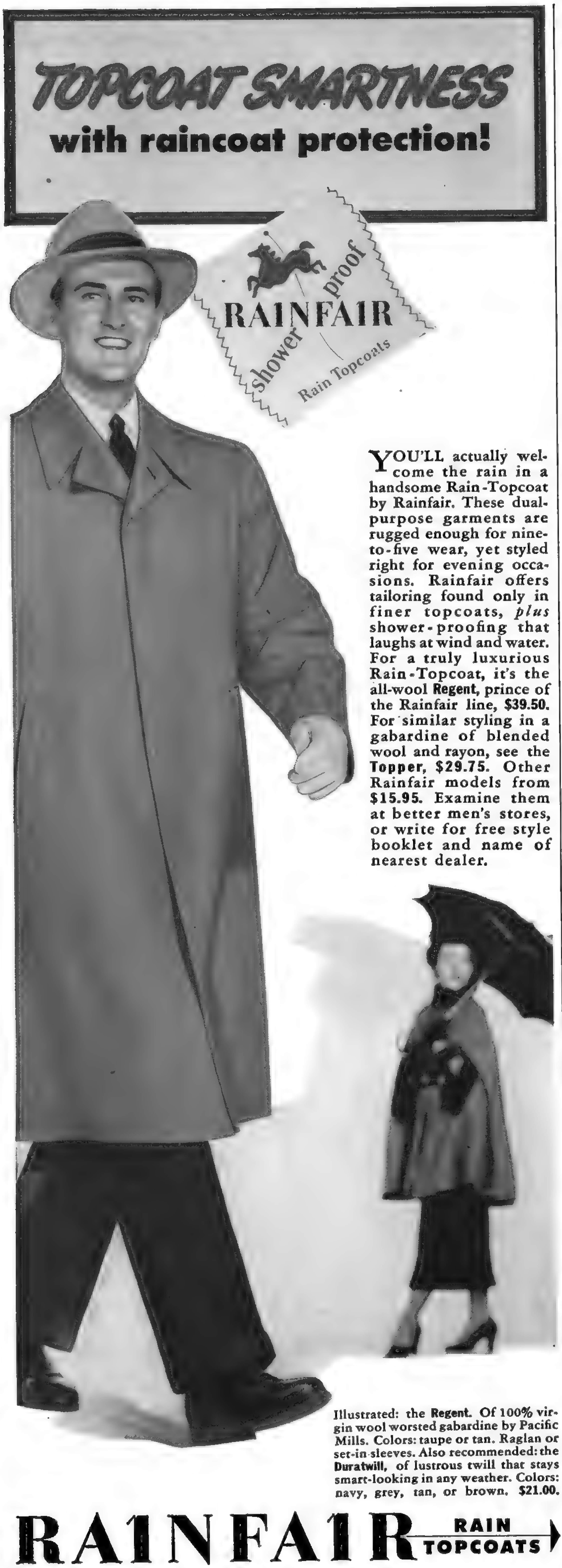

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was San Francisco. It was a lot farther, but there were compensations. For one thing, after he got a couple of days' ride from the City of the Angels, there would be no further pursuit. There were towns to the north. There would be food along the way, and water. He would write to Candace from there, from San Francisco.

He rode eastward until mid-afternoon and then, when he was satisfied that the new direction wouldn't take him through any of the outlying settlements of Los Angeles, turned northward.

The sun went down and the air chilled. He unrolled his coat from the pommel and put it on, but he was still cold. Finally he came to a dry wash that would hide a fire from anybody who might come too close.

He made two fires and cleared the rocks away between them. He lay down on the bare sand, scooping a hole for his hips, and in less than five seconds he was asleep.

He woke up feeling very cold and lay there staring at the sky, thinking that it was funny the fires had died down so much that there wasn't even a glow from them. Then, as he turned his head a little, the skin prickled across the back of his shoulders. Not a yard away from his eyes was a pair of boots—heavy boots made of thick creased leather. New soles had been recently nailed inexpertly over the old ones. Whoever was wearing the boots was sitting down. Without moving his head, Edgar slid his eyes up the stained pants until he saw a pair of thick hands clasped around a pair of knees. In one of the hands was a gun—held idly, but pointed straight at his head.

A familiar voice said, "He's awake, Ab."

Edgar didn't move. His mind was fighting the terror that had settled over him again, trying to decide what to do, knowing there was nothing he could do.

A foot prodded him in the back. It belonged to the man called Ab. "Get up," he said in his flat voice. He kicked again—this time with jolting force.

Edgar got up. Fury, washed over him in a tidal wave, moved his hand to the man's shirt. His other hand, fisted, swung to the stubbled chin. He held the man for a moment, then dropped him like a sack of wet wash onto the rocks.

The man called Streeter laughed. "Ab," he said, "I told you before never to judge a man by his pretty clothes. And, besides, this hombre saved our lives."

The man called Ab said, "Gault never . . ."

"Shut up!"

Edgar's hand went to his belt, but the gun wasn't there. He looked at Streeter, saw it at his side. Streeter tossed the gun to him. "We only took it to play safe," he said. "You kinda got you a reputation this mornin' as bein' a little hasty, and we didn't want you to shoot us before you got full awake."

Edgar picked up the gun and stuck it in his belt. "What are you doing here?" he asked.

"Same thing you are," the big man told him. "Headin' for more congenial company. We been hidin' since you co-operated us outta a necktie party, waitin' for a chance to travel. This here is Ab Heath." He nodded toward the other man. "My name's Joe Streeter. Which way you pointin'?"

"North," Edgar said. Then he added, "I saw you shoot at Mort D'Angel."

"Shoot *at* him?" Streeter said. "Hell, I took him heart-high both times."

Edgar didn't say anything, and he heard Heath chuckle. "Joe oughta be a stage actor."

"Which way you say you're headin'?" Streeter asked, ignoring Heath.

"North."

Streeter was silent a moment. "Well," he said finally, "we're goin' that way, too. We might as well travel together."

"I'll stay by myself," Edgar said.

Streeter rubbed his hand over his bristly cheek. He got up slowly. "Be more sensible to stick together," he said. "We're goin' right up the Big Tujunga."

Edgar thought for a moment, while the two men waited in silence. He needed help to get straight on the way to Frisco. Better do it with an appearance of friendliness. "Maybe you're right," he said at last. "Wait'll I find my horse."

"We got your horse," Heath said in a flat voice.

"We saddled him up for you," Streeter said. He chuckled. "You know you're about the best *quick* horse thief ever I seen. You stole Don Juan's top cuttin' cayuse."

Somehow this geniality worried Edgar more than open hostility would have. When they were mounted and on their way, Streeter rode a little behind him. It was plain that he was, in a way, a prisoner.

There was a certain relief, though. These men, even if he was their prisoner, seemed to know where they were going. Edgar's flight had been thus far so amateurish and panic-stricken and he had been so overwhelmingly alone, that now moving *someplace* with someone else gave him a sense, almost, of security. This time last night he'd been at a party—maybe in the garden with Candace. The memory of Candace, her vision now close before him, made him smile.

Four hours of riding brought another dawn, red and clear. The country was vast and magnificent, the valleys spotted here and there with cattle. They saw deer, tame and incurious; and once a grizzly bear stood up behind a rock and looked at them. They threaded their way up a little stream and crossed and recrossed it many times, winding up and down the precipitous ledges which the horses of Streeter and Heath seemed to find familiar.

The sun grew as it climbed the sky, but the high crown of the sombrero shielded Edgar's head and the wide brim shaded his eyes. He found himself whistling.

They had just rounded a promontory when they suddenly found themselves in a camp. Suddenly and immediately. Well-fed horses grazed at the sweetly grassed end of the cul-de-sac and a woven willow corral held other mounts. Indians cooked over small, strangely smokeless fires, and two white men were playing cards on a rock. Aside from the absence of women and children, it presented a strangely tranquil and domestic scene.

At one edge of the clearing was a thatched lean-to, and in its protective shade sat a man clothed incongruously in black. He sat on a satinwood box and studied a map.

He looked up at Edgar and smiled an animal-toothed smile. "Welcome!"

The man's eyes were opaque grey. He was the man that Streeter had shot. Edgar stepped down from his horse. "Thank you," he said.

An Indian took the horse, looked at it for a moment in admiration, and led it to a little brook, where he removed the saddle and rubbed it with dry grass. Edgar watched him, questions racing through his mind. He'd seen Streeter flee from this man in terror—and yet Streeter had led him here.

"Hungry?" said the man in black.

"I am," Edgar said. "I don't want to impose, but . . ."

The grey-eyed man barked an order; and Heath retreated sulkily to one of the groups of Indians by a fire, gathered food from their pot into a wooden bowl, and brought it back to Edgar.

Edgar thanked him and dipped in with his hands, as the Indians seemed to be doing; he plucked forth a chunk of hot and seasoned venison. It was delicious.

The man watched him. "I know a great deal about you," he said. "It is a fetish of mine to be informed about people. But there is one small foolish thing. I don't know your first name. I like to address my *compadres* by their given names. I want them to feel at ease with me."

Edgar realized, almost with dismay, that he *did* feel somewhat at ease, anyway, but he said around the second large bite of venison: " 'Gar."

"Gar Tutwiler," the black-clad one mused. "A purposeful name. Gar. It fits you."

Well, Edgar thought, he never had liked Edgar; it was too—well, not enough like Gar. He rolled the new name over in his mind as he swallowed the meat. He had a new and purposeful name. He would be purposeful. "I'm on my way to San Francisco, but I'd appreciate staying here until tomorrow morning."

The man nodded. "I can understand your motives, Gar, but your judgment is clouded. They'd pick you up in a day and hang you."

Edgar said nothing, waiting.

"You see," he went on, "I told you I knew a lot about you. You went out with the posse the night before last when we ran off our little rehearsal, and then you let Streeter and Heath here get away. Or so Johnny Gault can prove. For which he'd have you strung up before Miss Forest could say 'Please.' Sam Smith would have testified against you." He paused. "If you hadn't murdered him. And Don Juan would kill you on sight for stealing his top horse."

"You are going to San Francisco?" Edgar asked.

"Indeed! And you are going to help me."

"I am?" Edgar said.

"Let me tell you a little story," Mort D'Angel said. "You are a confederate of rustlers, you are a murderer and a horse thief. Furthermore, you are a thorn in the romantic side of Jonathan Gault, heretofore self-assayed as the greatest catch west of the great divide. You haven't a chance—alone." He paused and licked the cigarette he was rolling.

Edgar was silent.

"I have, scattered strategically about these hills, a hundred and fifty Indians. They are good Indians, of stern and wonderful stuff, having resisted the white man's religion, whiskey, and diseases. And I am their leader. I am," he said, getting up, "almost their god."

"And your name is Angel de Mort," Edgar said.

"I call myself Mort D'Angel," the other corrected gently. "It signifies death to Los Angelenos—the angels, as some of them humorously call themselves."

Edgar looked at him. Mort D'Angel returned the look blandly.

"The raid that you so gallantly rode to prevent was a rehearsal," he said. "Part of a stage setting—like my invulnerability to lead bullets."

"Yes," Edgar said. "I saw you shot. With my own eyes."

"You understand the necessity of such chicanery in dealing with impressionable savages. You are a man of culture like myself," Mort D'Angel said, dismissing the episode with Streeter without further explanation. "My next move on the City of the Angels will net me twenty thousand head of fat beeves. And fortune—my fortune, which has never failed me yet—has delivered you to me. You will be useful."

Mort D'Angel made a gesture of dismissal and turned away.

They gave Gar Tutwiler blankets to sleep in that night. They weren't very clean, but they were warm; everybody treated him with an offhandedness which you couldn't call friendliness, but it had no hostility to it.

It was only after the whole camp was asleep that a chill of terror crept slowly over him. He was wide awake, looking at the stars, and he thought about everything that had happened in two days. He had killed a man; he was a fugitive from the law—or, rather, Jonathan Gault's law. He was Gar Tutwiler—Wanted. That was Edgar Tutwiler, the well-brought-up young man from Philadelphia, who had journeyed to the Great West to claim an inheritance.

Mort D'Angel regarded him as a kindred spirit. Joe Streeter regarded him as a good horse thief. Ab Heath knew him as a man who would slug a man senseless who kicked him.

Slowly, carefully, he stood up. The sleeping forms near him didn't stir. The friendliness of D'Angel hadn't extended to letting him keep his gun. His horse was in the corral, too far to try to reach. A coyote howled far away and sent a chill through him, but wild animals didn't attack men. Only men attacked men.

He walked a few steps, casually, framing an excuse if he were challenged. He walked like that, slowly and casually, beyond the edge of the little encampment to where the ground began to slope toward the north ridge. It was so simple that he thought for a moment of going back for his horse—he was considering Don Juan's prize mount his own now, he reflected

Continued on page 100

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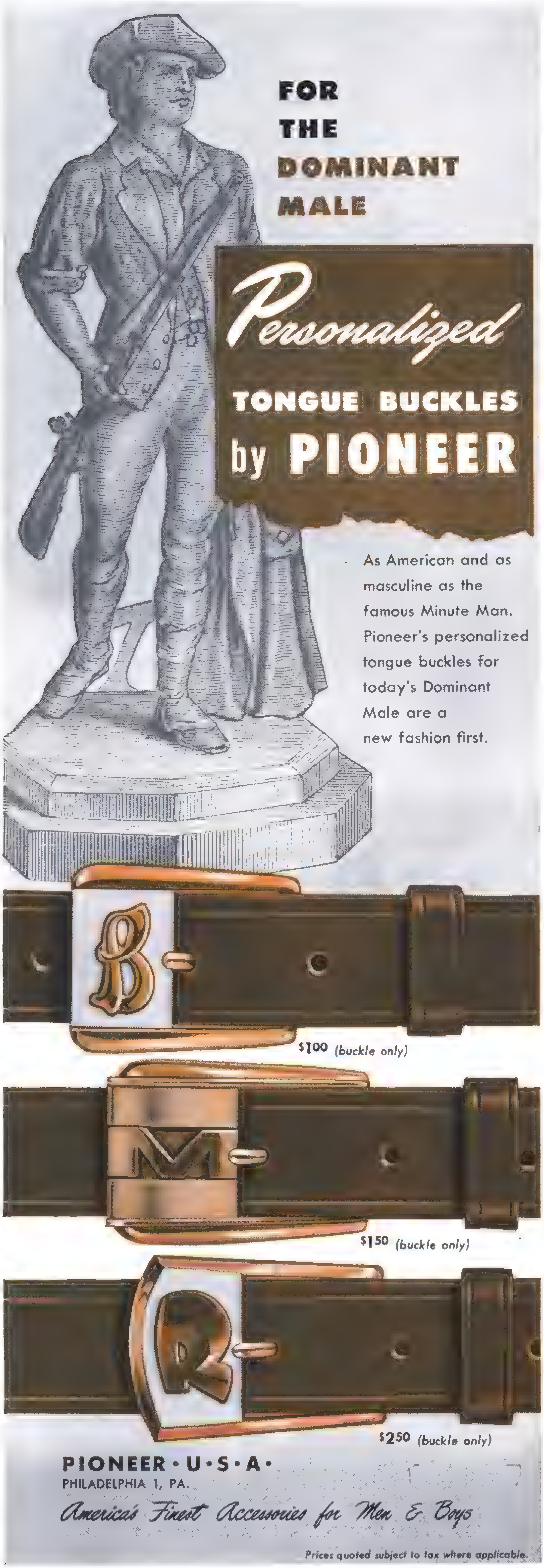

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wryly. But even that great steed could not walk on tiptoe.

In a half-hour he was on the ridge. He knew that. The ground began to slope away before him, but the brush was too thick to see what was below. Then he stopped, his skin prickling at a tiny sound behind him. He turned, but there was nothing. He resisted a panic urge to run. Finally he moved.

The brush crackled behind him, but he never got turned around. Something hit him and he was down in a tangle of brush. Grotesquely, the enormous sombrero slipped half off, and he felt the chin cord cutting into his neck.

He struggled in the brush, trying to get up, trying to see what he was fighting. Something landed solidly on the back of his head. He lay still.

A voice cut through the vast, throbbing emptiness that was Gar Tutwiler's head. "That's better," the voice said. "He's all right, now."

His face and head were wet; water had trickled coldly down the back of his neck under his coat. He opened his eyes and saw daylight made dim by the roof of a thatched lean-to. He moved his head a little—painfully—and saw a man bending over him, a man with opaque grey eyes that even now held no expression except one of detached interest.

"You left quite a trail," Mort D'Angel said. "The Indians were amused, following it." He stopped. "Heath really did you a kindness. You wouldn't have gotten five miles through these hills alone. And he hit you very scientifically."

Edgar got the world steadied a little. He put one hand tenderly to the spot on the back of his head that seemed to be the center of the trouble. It was just an aching head, now. He felt a damp mass of moss. "What time is it?" he asked.

"The next morning," Mort said.

"All right," said Edgar. He considered a moment. "I won't try to get away again." He hesitated, then added, "I guess maybe I'd better decide to come in with you after all."

D'Angel gave him a long amused look, and Edgar was glad that the pain in his head gave him an excuse not to meet it.

"That's fine," the rustler chief said, finally. "We can use a man that handles a gun like you do."

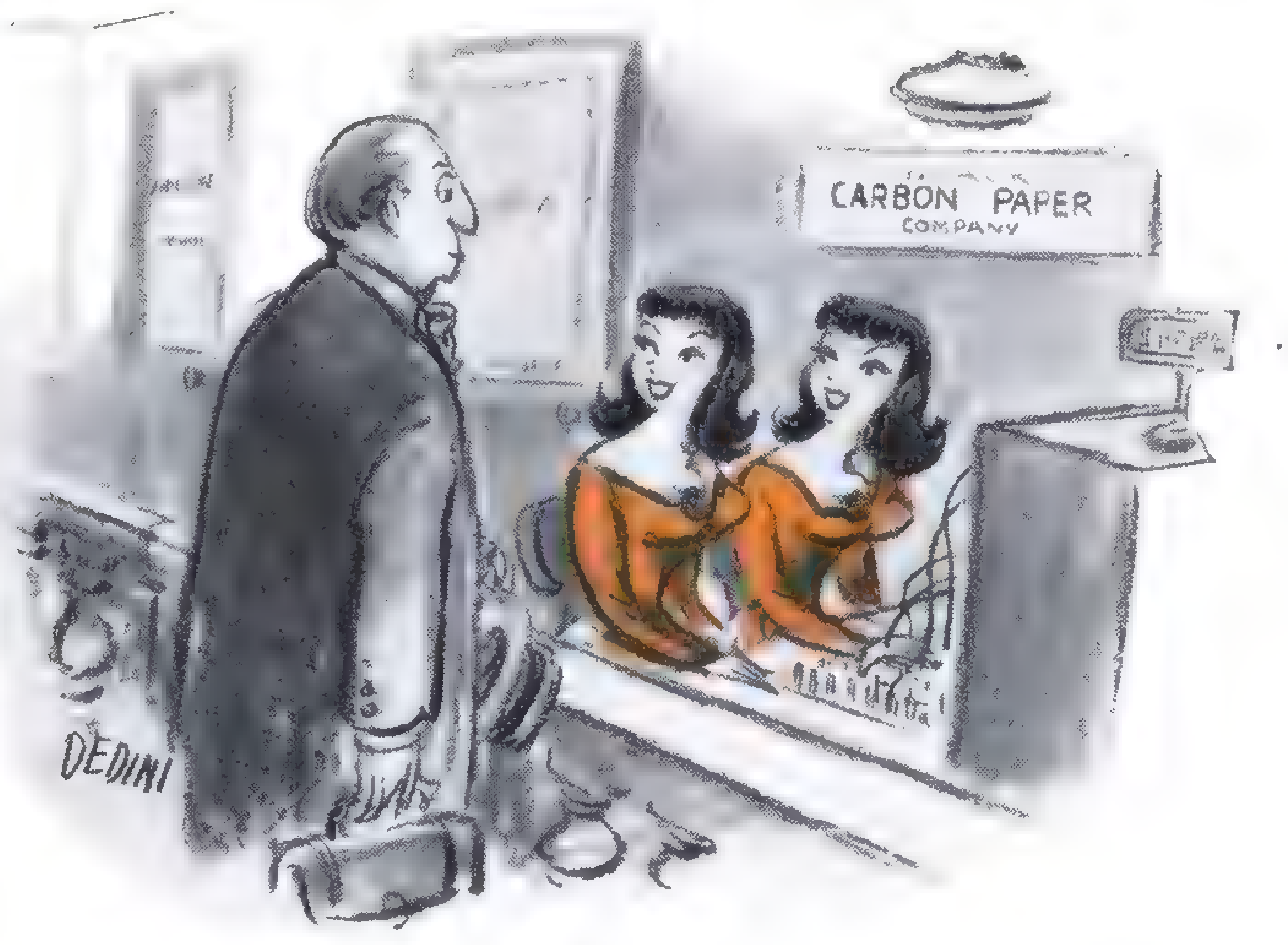
But he didn't offer to give Edgar a gun. The day passed slowly. By midafternoon Edgar was sure it was the longest day he had ever lived through. The white men in the camp played cards endlessly. The Indians cooked their meals, ate them, slept, cooked again. D'Angel rode out for a short time just before sundown, but he was back before dark. After dark, the cardplaying went on by the light of fires. Nobody asked Edgar to play and he wouldn't have known what to do if they had. He rolled up in his blankets finally, but he didn't sleep for a long time. The pain in his head was miraculously almost gone now, with only an intermittent ache to remind him of his foolish attempt to escape.

When he woke in the morning, it was as if he had passed from one dream to another—and opened his eyes to still a third. Nothing was different the second day. The cardplaying went on almost without talk; the Indians moved about silently or sat talking in undertones. And a little while before sunset, D'Angel rode away again, and this time he was gone deep into the night. But he spoke no word, when he returned, of where he'd been, and no one questioned him.

The third morning, it was as if the early sun were an insult. The same sun in the same cloudless blue sky; the same filthy figures rolling out of their blankets, coughing and spitting, moving stiffly on sleep-numbed legs, cursing over their breakfast, cursing the sun. Edgar washed his face and shaved with D'Angel's razor, but the others never thought of it. He found himself seized with an almost uncontrollable fury at the tedium of all this.

He wasn't the only one that felt it. Before noon, a fight broke out among two of the gamblers. Out of the usual silence came a spate of curses, the crack of fist against flesh. They rolled on the ground, flailing with fists and feet. The other players drew away a little and watched. There was no shouting now—only the harsh breathing of the fighters.

D'Angel came out of the lean-to and watched for a few moments. He walked over and stood above the fighters until they had almost spent themselves. Then he reached down, put a hand on the collar of each, and pulled them to their feet as if they had been two empty sacks. He said nothing to them,



"Yes?"

but, as he turned away, he called "Gar!"

Edgar went over to the lean-to. He found the rustler chief sitting on his satinwood box.

"You see," he said, "what waiting does to animals. Every day it becomes harder to hold them in check. We are not yet ready to move, and so these stupid men grow impatient. I must give them something to keep them busy—and in that I shall need your help."

Edgar said nothing.

"Tomorrow," D'Angel said, "there is a stage due from San Bernardino. There won't be a great deal of money on it, I suppose, but there will be passengers—perhaps a few bottles of something to drink. It will entertain them to hold it up. You shall lead them."

"No," Edgar said.

D'Angel looked at him. He said, "I have had great difficulty keeping my white men from killing you. I alone appreciate the kind of man you are. They resent you. They think you consider yourself better than they are." His thin lips moved imperceptibly toward a smile. "The fact that you wash your face in the morning, that you shave. If you led them on a raid, I think they would feel more kindly toward you."

"I can't help it," Edgar said. "I won't do it. If you feel the way you do, why don't you let me go? I don't care how many head of cattle you steal—nor what you do to Los Angeles. Give me my horse, a blanket. I won't even ask for my gun."

D'Angel shook his head. "No," he said. "It is too easy for me to put myself in your place. You would get out of sight of this camp, and you'd start thinking about our plan. You'd get word to them, warn them. You might even be so quixotic as to go back yourself. No matter what you promised, I am sure your better nature would be too much for you to resist."

Edgar wondered briefly if that were true. He hadn't thought of it.

"Besides," D'Angel said, "*I* want you to lead the raid on the stage. I have my reason. There must be no bloodshed, no one harmed. If they went without you, they might get too excited. They're not men who can think far ahead, and I let them do this only to keep them happy until the time comes."

"Well," said Edgar. "I don't give a damn why you're doing it. That's up to you. But count me out."

"Just as you say." D'Angel shrugged. "But I am going now and tell them what I've decided. If you want it otherwise, you can tell them." He walked a little way and paused. In a mildly curious voice, he asked, "Did you ever see a man staked down in this country, spread-eagled and staked down? Ants, you know."

Edgar saw the change in the men when they heard what D'Angel told them—they were like grotesque caricatures of children being promised a party. The card-playing stopped immediately. The two men who had fought went over and squatted together and in a moment were in deep, amicable conversation. Streeter took out his gun and sighted at an imaginary stage moving swiftly along an imaginary road. Edgar looked down at the ground. Large red ants were scouting about. He saw one of them pick up a grain twice its size and start away with it. When D'Angel came back to the lean-to, Edgar said nothing.

The next day they rode out of the camp, up over the south rim and down. D'Angel had given Edgar back his gun—Major Forest's gun—and he hoped to be able to use it to make his getaway. But he was surrounded by D'Angel's men, each watching his every move. There was nothing he could do but ride along with them.

They stopped on a hump of land that rose a bit above the evenness of the slope. They didn't have long to wait. Far to the east, a thin plume of dust formed and moved slowly along the faint scar on the scorched land that was the road to Los Angeles. Soon the four horses and the lunging vehicle behind them were in clear sight.

Streeter's voice barked, "Here we go!" Somebody gave Edgar's horse a cut on the rump, and he had to grab the saddle to keep from being flipped out.

The stage came up over a small rise and the horses came to a roaring stop at the sight of the motionless figures in front of them. Streeter called to the driver, "Which way to San Gabriel, friend?"

The stage driver looked around quickly. Heath knew what he was looking for and his hand went to his gun, but Edgar grabbed it without thinking and tore it out of Heath's hand. The driver reached for his carbine, and Edgar fired then; the rifle twisted away, like a live thing, out of the driver's hand.

There was a stunned silence. Then Edgar said, "There will be no shooting, please." He said it in a low voice, because if he had said it any louder, he couldn't have controlled the shaking of his throat.

Streeter said to the driver, his gun unobtrusively on Edgar, "You better come down off of there," and the driver, his hands above his head, jumped to the ground.

"Tell 'em to come out," Streeter said.

The driver spoke over his shoulder and the door of the stage opened. Three men, a woman, and a little girl got out and lined up—all of them, except the little girl, obviously terrified. Edgar's mind was working with all its power to keep panic from his face as he felt their eyes on him. To them he was the personification of everything they had ever heard about bad men. The neat, well-cut broadcloth suit, the bright scarf at the neck. The incongruous but somehow becoming sombrero. It all fitted perfectly into the picture. And his polite reminder about not shooting would have completed it.

Streeter and one of the other men searched the stage, then the passengers. They showed an unexpected rudimentary politeness to the lady, although it didn't prevent them from emptying her reticule. Edgar saw her distress. "Leave the lady's things intact," he said sharply.

Streeter looked up at him, but Streeter's hands were full and Edgar held a gun. Streeter gave

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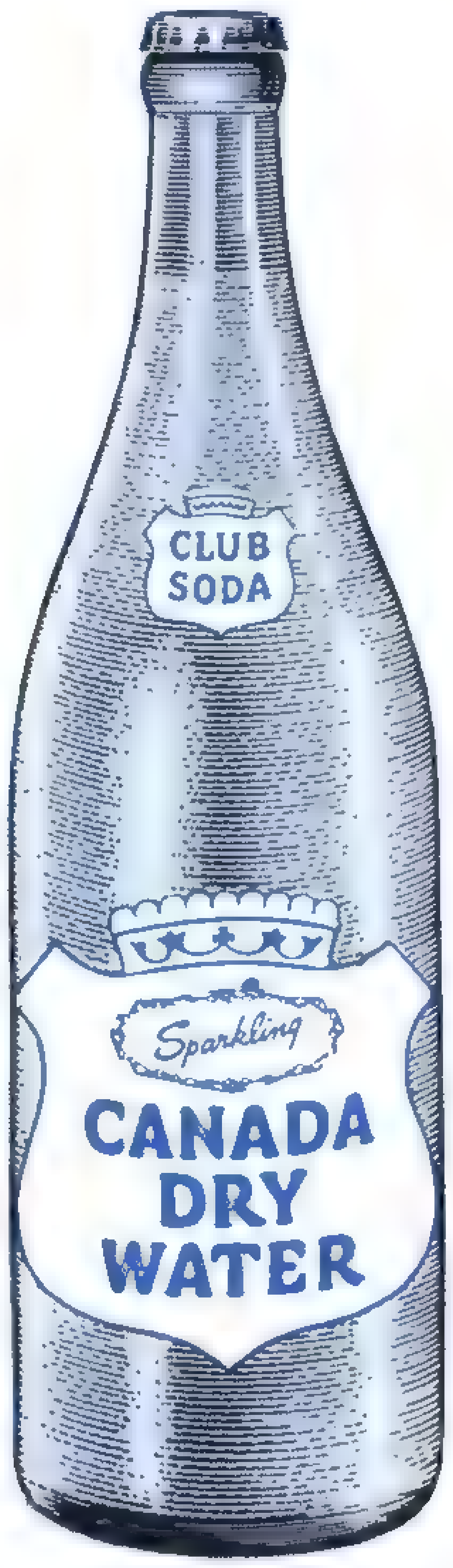

the woman back her things.

The haul included several hundred dollars in gold, a few trinkets, and eight bottles of whiskey. The passengers got back in the stage and the driver climbed up on his box.

Streeter said, "Tell 'em in Los Angeles that you met Gar Tutwiler."

Edgar turned indignantly. But Streeter was mounted now and his hand held a gun. Edgar called to the woman, "If you see Miss Candace Forest, please tell her that I will explain everything." The triteness of the remark made him color and he added, "Tell her that she will hear from me."

Streeter said, "We'll be gettin' back now, son. You lead the way." The stage swung into motion. The last thing Edgar heard was the little girl's exclamation: "Gee, Maw, ain't Miss Candace Forest lucky?"

That night the white men got very drunk. The Indians watched and said nothing. D'Angel thanked Edgar for his part in the raid. "I knew if I put you in command, I could depend upon there being no bloodshed. The love of man is a powerful weapon." The thin lips twitched in an ironic smile. "I understand that your forcefulness in enforcing orders impressed the others, too."

Edgar said, "Why are you holding me? I know your reasons aren't what you say they are."

"You're very valuable to me," D'Angel said, amiably. "After the stage holdup, your reputation in Los Angeles will be such that it will serve my purpose well to have you stay there."

Edgar looked at him sharply. He opened his mouth to speak, then closed it again.

"You will go with us on the raid," D'Angel said, "but we shall leave you there when we leave. As I said,"—his voice became bland—"I have complete faith in the loving heart of man to prevent pursuit, but I feel that having you in their hands will make the law-abiding element feel they haven't completely failed in exacting justice."

Edgar thought about this for a grim moment. Finally he asked, "And you think a commonplace fellow who unsuccessfully sought a title for inherited land will satisfy them?"

"I don't leave a commonplace fellow," Mort D'Angel said. "I leave a mysterious, dapper stranger, the best shot in town, a road agent who has recently held up a stage, a man who *said* he sought title for land owned by a fictitious person with the unlikely name of Elisha Farrow."

"Uncle Elisha traded a claim for the land," Edgar said doggedly. "Perhaps he *was* never in Los Angeles."

"But *you* were, amigo," Mort D'Angel told him. "You spent six weeks in town—the six weeks or so before the raid—in some mysterious preparations that you tried to cloak by saying you were looking for a deed."

Edgar began to understand. It was strange how poorly the prosaic life of an honest city dweller fitted you to understand the minds of men like Mort D'Angel. But it came into focus gradually. Chance had given him a man wanted for killing another man. He had planned it so that the killer looked like a bad man of a stature sufficient to satisfy most of the Los Angelenos that they were holding the rustler chief—if they caught him.

Mort D'Angel smiled. "Jonathan Gault will be grateful to have someone in his hands with whom to silence the public reaction to our raid," he said, drawing the toe of his boot through the dust. "Especially if that someone has been seen kissing his girl in the moonlight."

"You seem to know a lot," Edgar said.

"I've been in love," Mort D'Angel said. "That's why I trust it as a dependable factor in an operation. But I like you, Gar. And that is bad. You can depend on love, but friendship is unreliable. It troubles me to like you."

"I think you're crazy," Edgar said at last.

Mort D'Angel smiled again. "I guess I am. Because I like you, I am tempted to tell you things that you are too naïve to guess. But I will tell you one thing. Mark it well."

"I'm listening," Edgar said; and he made no attempt to keep the sarcasm from his voice.

"It is this," D'Angel said, serious now—and Edgar could see a troubled man behind the opaque eyes. "When it comes at last and you pull the trigger, *do not stop. Keep on pulling the trigger.*"

One large drop of rain fell in the dusty street of Los Angeles. It made a puff of dust, a small de-

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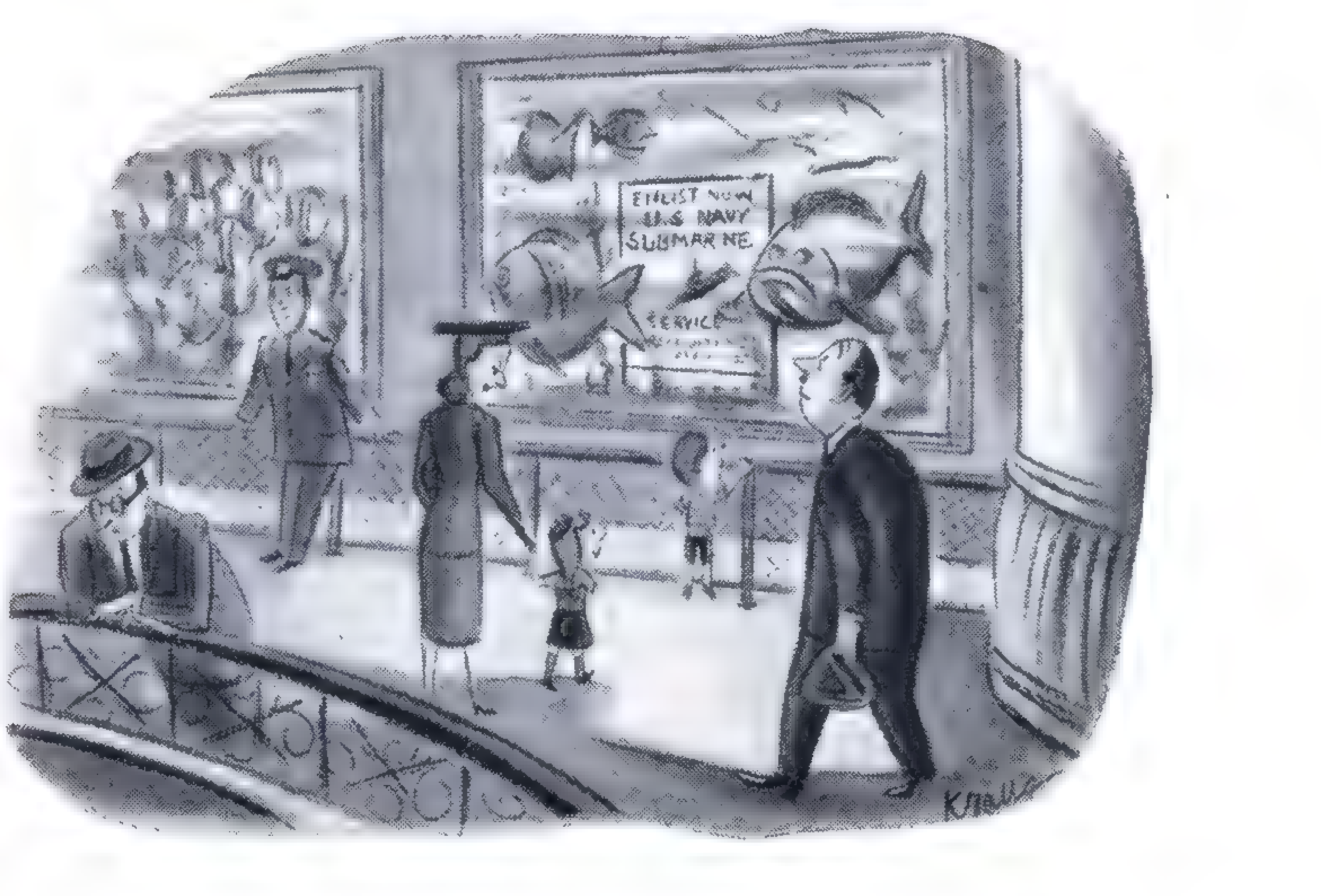

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pression, and then around it fell other drops, little explosions in the dust. People came out of the cantinas and stores and stood a moment, sighing luxuriously, letting the first big drops hit their unprotected faces.

The big drops stopped and became tiny drops, incredibly fine, incredibly close together, and where the big drops had dappled the dust on the pale green leaves of the trees, the little drops washed them clean; the whole country changed color from grey and brown to light green, and the sullen tan of the ground turned brown.

But no water ran upon the ground. The ground drank up the water, absorbed the water, blotting it up; and when a column of men moved down the big arroyo far to the east they moved silently, and no dust arose from the walking feet of their horses.

Other bands of mounted men were moving into the big coastal plain, through the grey rain. They moved carefully and slowly, combing the coulees where the cattle bunched, moving the cattle down, forming the herd, moving slowly. They were bunching the cattle subtly into a herd by guile and gentle persuasion.

Every fall the rains came, and every fall it was a fresh surprise. The streets that teemed the clock around were deserted, and the Angelenos watched the miracle of the rain in pleased astonishment, all activity suspended.

A hundred and fifty Californians moved on their horses. They were true Californians—stoic, brown. Their gods had brought the rains to this plain for a thousand generations and they were not surprised that their gods had not failed them. These one hundred and fifty Californians had taken the language of the Spaniards, but that was all. They stood by their own gods who always brought the rain. They rode now for a black-clad man who knew their gods well and had them for protection even unto lead bullets full in the chest. They bunched the cattle slowly and with skill—the Spaniards' cattle and the white men's cattle—and pushed them north.

Up in the mountains in Mort D'Angel's camp, there was much attention to firearms, to keep them dry. There were more people in the camp, now that it was breaking up. Other white men had ridden in—four or five of them—and each one brought a few Indians. But these Indians were armed and their faces carried anticipation like the white men's. They saddled the big grey stallion for Mort D'Angel—saddled him with his black saddle that was heavy with silver. They put Gar Tutwiler on his horse and crossed his hands and lashed them to the pommel with lengths of rawhide.

Mort D'Angel climbed laboriously up on his big horse and looked at his watch. The satinwood box lay empty in the rain. "It's been raining five hours now," he said slowly. "Now we move. It's all going off according to plan. In town we gut the gun shop, then break open the main cantinas and leave the liquor around. We want 'em to have free liquor. Rob the stores that sell lamp oil and candles, and run off any horses that you see. Tear down the poles of the Bella Union corral. Every man knows what to do. Be sure he does it."

Streeter said, "What about Gar, here?"

"No change in what I told you." He looked at Edgar speculatively and smiled a tiny smile. "No change at all."

And down in the town, things were in suspension. "Nobody does nothin' in California when it rains except set around and marvel."

They had something to marvel at. After nine months of choking dust, Commercial Street now ran three inches deep in water, and still the rain fell relentlessly. Six hours after it had started raining, it seemed that it had been raining forever.

Far out on the edge of town, the big grey stallion picked his way in the gathering twilight daintily, slowly, and then his rider gave a high cry and he broke into a lope. Behind him fifty horsemen followed, standing in their stirrups. They came with a purpose. Each man moved to where he had been assigned.

Two white men with two armed Indians behind them hit the Oroport. They came in, eight guns leveled, and one went behind the bar and put his shoulder to it and turned it over. It made a mighty crash and Gresham Greeley let out a sudden cry of pain as liquid profits ran in rivulets upon the floor. The other white man, from behind him, opened his scalp with his gun barrel and turned and shot down the big hanging lamp. It fell, still burning, and the flames started licking up one wall before anybody knew what had happened.

Shots sounded up and down the streets as D'Angel's men moved through them, shooting for fun and for effect. Occasionally, somebody drunk or brave would try to rally a resistance and then they dealt swiftly with him, and the pocket of resistance would melt. There was no sense to it and there was no defense because the Angelenos had no clear idea of what they were defending, or why, and that created an element of stultifying shock.

And then the rain. People didn't operate in the rain—not in California. The rules had been broken, and it left everything out of focus.

At last, the gunmen rode out of town, and at the edge they met again. They dispersed the horses they had captured into the darkness and Mort D'Angel took a roll call. Every man was there that had ridden into Los Angeles, save one. Edgar Tutwiler was missing.

They had left Edgar Tutwiler at his hotel. Right at the door. They had cut the thongs that bound his wrists and set him down in the mud. Heath looked down at Edgar standing shivering in the rain. He rubbed his jaw. "Mort said to give you this," he said at last, and tossed down a package wrapped in oiled cloth. He turned his horse and moved away.

Edgar stood quite still a moment, his hands automatically searching the outlines of the package. It was a gun.

And suddenly Philadelphia seemed very close. He ran to the cubicle that had been his room in the hotel. Smith's blood still stained the floor where, in the wet darkness, he burrowed in the bed. The money belt was still there, still reassuringly heavy. He

Continued on page 107

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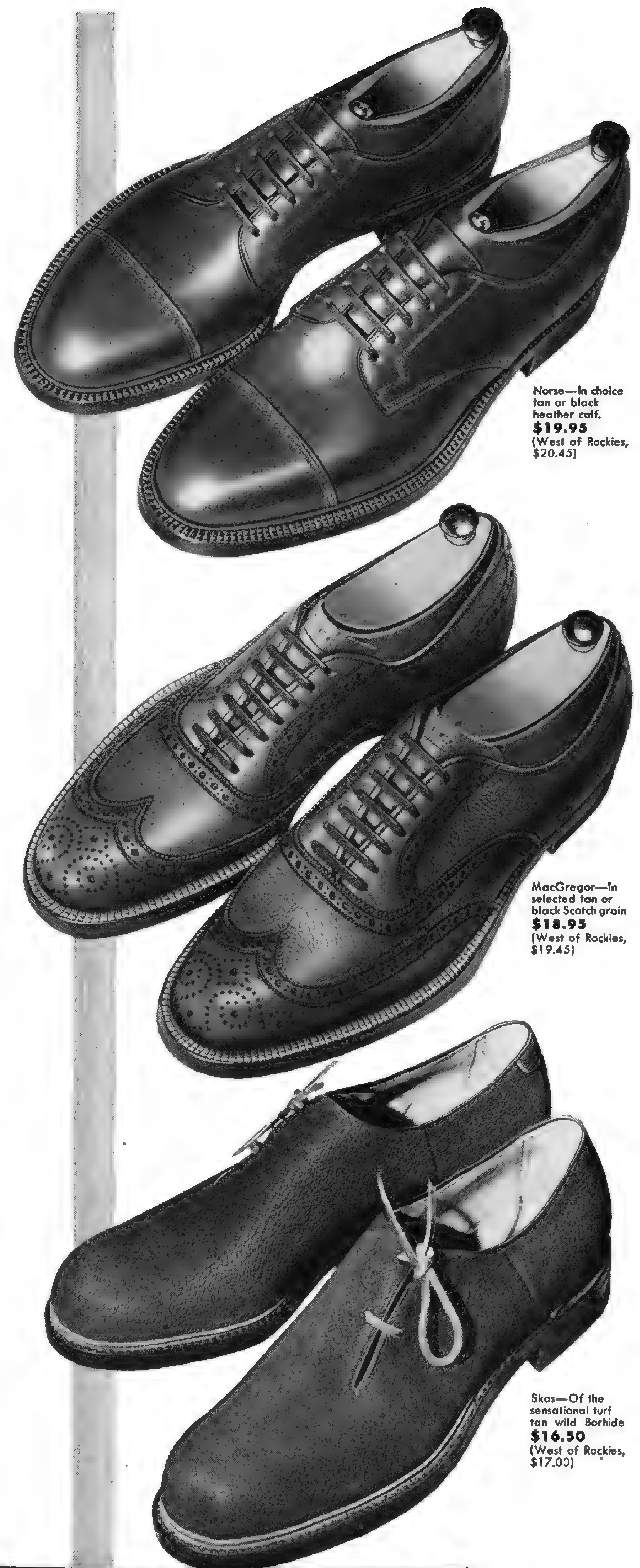

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buckled it on. He stuck the gun, still wrapped, in the waistband of his pants. He stepped out and looked about. The ship that would take him to Philadelphia would be lying even now in San Pedro harbor. He had a gun. He had his money. But no horse whinnied in the broken corral of the Bella Union, and up the street a fresh volley of yelps marked the progress of two riders. He eased the gun under his waistband and stepped into the deeply embrasured doorway of the room next to his own.

The horses hard-ridden, pulled up in a long, splashing skid, and he heard the voice of Jonathan Gault. "Tutwiler's still here! He's armed but afoot. We've got to get him! He's the leader."

Major Forest's voice came to him then, tight and frightened. "But Candace . . ."

"She'll be all right. We've *got* to get Tutwiler!" Four booted feet moved to his door. "We've got to get Tutwiler while we have the chance."

Major Forest said again, "But my daughter . . ." and then his voice was drowned by the sound of a heavy shoulder against wood.

Edgar Tutwiler walked quietly to the horses, started to mount the one he recognized as Major Forest's, then stopped and moved to Gault's horse and, taking out his penknife, cut the cinch. He wouldn't have done it a week ago. It made him feel good.

There was a light in his room now and enormous shadows played vaguely from the door. He stepped up to Major Forest's horse, cut him once with the end of the reins, and headed out of town at a hard run. Rittenhouse Square seemed just around the corner. He heard Gault yell. He heard Gault run to his horse. He heard Gault step into the saddle—and heard the saddle fall upon him in the mud. It was a sound that he would cherish.

The ship that would lie in San Pedro harbor would take him home. Home to an ordered life in a civilized town. It was as if he were awaking at last from a distorted dream that was peopled with men who thought they were gods. With Vigilantes who would hang a man for sport.

With Candace Forest. With the scent of silk and lilacs. With warm lips and teasing eyes.

With Candace Forest.

Gault knew that I was in town and afoot and armed. Is Gault clairvoyant? How did he know that?

Edgar pulled his horse to a walk, and Rittenhouse Square seemed vague now. For suddenly he knew where Candace Forest was tonight. He knew what Mort D'Angel had meant with his phrase about the loving heart of man that would prevent pursuit. The loving heart of a man who would not see his daughter harmed —even if it meant rustlers going undisturbed!

Edgar pulled his horse to a stop. He knew a lot of things, now. And he sat quite still, relishing the impact of his knowledge, the sure impact of his emotions. You can count on love. Mort knew that.

Edgar thought for a moment, without nostalgia, of Philadelphia and of the dull people there who would never have a chance to fall in love completely and at once upon a moon-drenched night. And learn of it completely and at once upon a rainy night. He knew he'd never see Rittenhouse Square again as he stepped down from his horse.

He unstrapped the heavy money belt, moving to the side of the road, and hid it under a rock that he marked by a lonely oak. Money wouldn't buy the things that he must have now, and the belt was heavy. He felt the dry gun in his waistband as he moved back toward his horse. Suddenly he stumbled, felt the ground come up, felt his head hit a rock. He stood up shakily and touched the cut above his eye. It was bleeding freely, but he wiped the blood away abstractedly and climbed up on his horse. He started towards Los Angeles in the rain.

Jonathan Gault would find him, all right. The blood caked in his eyebrow and gave him a rakish appearance. The blood dyed his gay scarf. The horse loped easily, heading home.

They would be organizing now. He stepped down from the horse and tied him lightly in the shelter of an abandoned shack at the edge of town. The honest citizens would be organizing now, planning what to do. Jonathan Gault would be there. Edgar came around a corner and saw light pouring from the Oroport Saloon.

Gresham Greeley had his head bandaged, and the rain had put out the fire and he'd swung new lamps. He'd got the bar upright and had swept up the broken glass. He'd tapped a fresh keg of whiskey so that no brave Vigilante need ride out unfortified.

Edgar walked toward the Oroport, keeping close to the wall. Fifty feet from the entrance of the saloon, he stopped and flattened himself in a door. A group of riders were stopping in front of the Oroport, tethering lead horses. The Vigilantes were organizing now; they were bringing in fresh horses to replace the ones the riders had driven off.

Edgar moved between buildings to the back of the saloon, and, finding an empty whiskey barrel, he stood it by the wall. There was a charred hole in the low roof of the building at that point. He pulled off his shoes and set them aside and climbed onto the barrel and then to the roof.

Keeping his face from the light that shone through, he looked down through the hole. Jonathan Gault stood drying his muddy clothes by the crude fireplace at the end of the room where they had kindled a small fire. His coat was off, hung over a chair, and his big six-gun swung on his right leg.

Edgar heard him speak. "Tutwiler is the head of this scheme and he's the one we've got to hang. That'll break the back of the raiders and we can go out and get our cattle then."

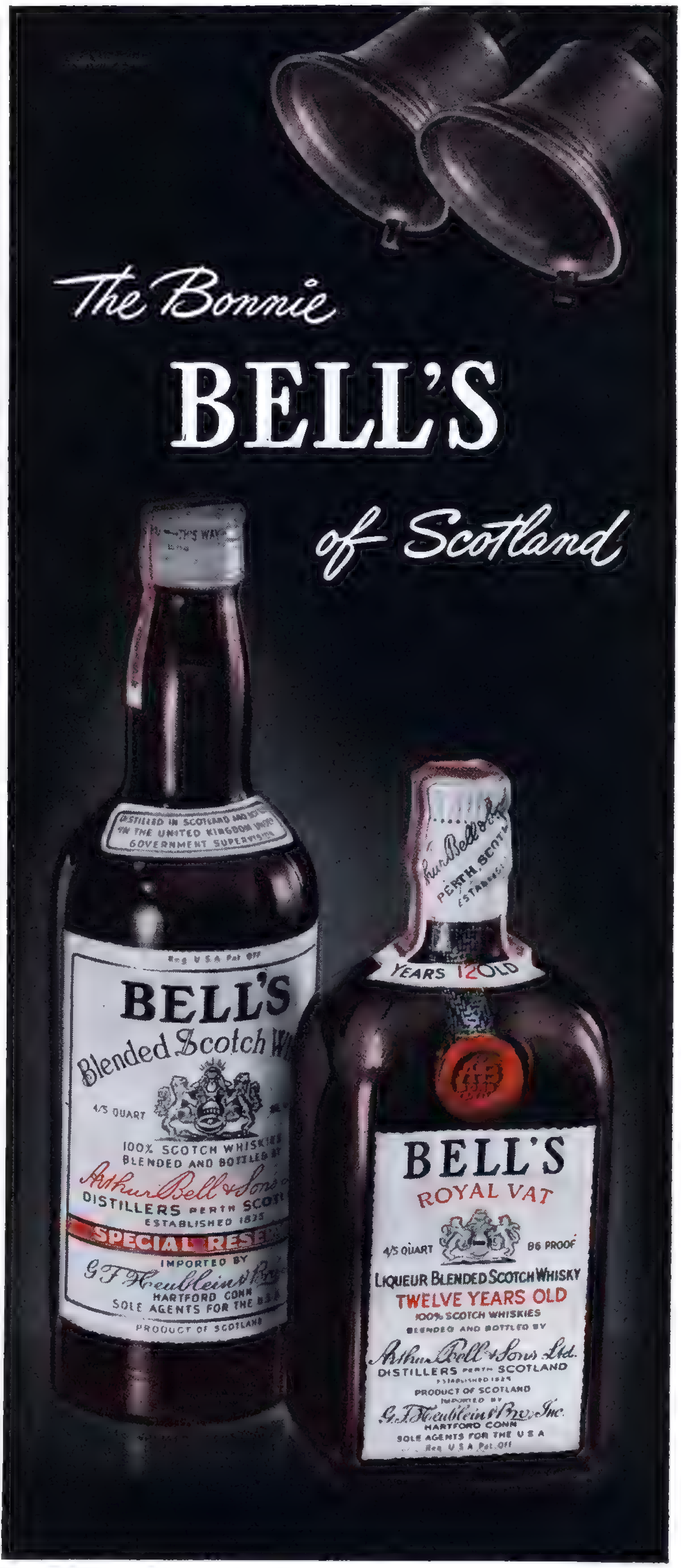
"But, Johnny," Major Forest said, pacing palely from wall to bar. "They've got Candace! We've got to get *her* back!"

"We can't get her back," Gault said patiently. "If we go out after the cattle, they'll kill her."

Major Forest sat down and buried his face in his hands. "If you only hadn't come by and led me away on the wild-goose chase after Tutwiler, I'd have been home."

Pete Biggs appeared in Edgar's

Continued on page 108



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line of vision. He said, explaining apparently to late-comers, "Mr. Tutwiler steal the Major's hoss and leave Mr. Jonathan floppin' in the mud. Wonder how come Mr. Tutwiler was afoot . . ."

Jonathan Gault said angrily, "Shut up! If I find Edgar Tutwiler, he'll—"

Edgar Tutwiler's long legs swung down out of the hole and he held himself by one hand an instant while he freed his gun and brought it up. Then he was standing on the floor, gun in hand.

In his bare feet, his face covered with blood, he stood, half crouched, his gun on Jonathan Gault. There was a long silence. Then the sigh of twenty escaping breaths.

"You found him," Edgar said.

Jonathan Gault stood still a long moment, and then slowly his hand moved toward his gun.

Edgar pulled the trigger. There was a click. He snapped the trigger twice more as Gault brought his gun up, and then he dived.

The roar of Gault's gun filled the room and there was suddenly great scrambling. Edgar pulled the trigger, lying on the floor, not aiming, and there was a roar. "*Keep on pulling the trigger.*" That's what Mort had said.

Edgar scrambled to his feet. The room was clear and Gault was standing under the hole in the roof now, their positions almost reversed from Edgar's long, sliding leap.

An errant rivulet ran down the hole, fell toward the floor. Gault brought his gun down carefully and squeezed. The hammer clicked.

Edgar fired and the lead tore at Gault's hat. "Don't move. Drop your gun and raise your hands."

Gault obeyed.

"So you lured Major Forest away so they could steal his daughter. And you are strong against pursuit. *Your* plan is to hang me. Well, come and hang me, Jonathan Gault."

"Do you believe him?" Gault asked the crowd at large.

Edgar whirled halfway around and fired at a point slightly above Don Juan Rivera's head. Don Juan took his empty hand quickly from his side. "Don't do those things," Edgar said softly.

Major Forest said, "The man's mad."

"He's in it," Edgar said, and his voice was a little weary because he saw that he would never be believed. Suddenly, though, he smiled. "Pete," he said. "Go take the gun from Major Forest's holster and put it in Gault's."

Pete Biggs moved rabbitlike, obeying, then scuttled to the wall.

Edgar shoved his own gun into his waistband, and no man moved in that long room. Slowly he raised his hands, and his voice was almost a whisper. "You knew my gun was empty before, but Mort D'Angel gave me a tiny chance. He left bullets in the last three cylinders. I've got just one more." He raised his hands and stood facing Gault, both his hands above his head as he watched the other.

"Draw, Jonathan!"

Gault swept his hand down, and his gun was out and up when Edgar fired. The bullet tore Gault's shoulder above his heart and spun him around. He dropped the gun and cried out.

Edgar swept his eyes around the room, watching for movement. There was none. Gault cried out again, then, and Edgar moved, barefooted and silent, backward toward the door. He turned at the door and plunged through it, and they heard his bare feet pattering in the mud for a moment; then there was silence.

Pete Biggs went to the door and looked out. When he came back, they had Gault on the bar and were bandaging his wound. Major Forest was looking down at him speculatively. "Johnny," he said at last, "you'd better answer a few questions. I think you'd better . . ."

It was dawn and the rain had stopped for a little while when Edgar Tutwiler walked the major's horse out of a clump of trees. The girl saw him first; her eyes flew open and she gave a little exclamation. Then Mort D'Angel was reaching for his gun.

"Don't do it, Mort!"

Mort D'Angel's hand stopped. He turned and saw the gun in Edgar's hand and pulled his horse to a stop. Far behind them they heard the slow and muffled beat of thousands of hoofs. "It was a hell of an idea, Mort," said Edgar, "but it didn't work out."

Mort D'Angel said nothing. He sat measuring his chances and Edgar grinned, his gun leveled at Mort's head. "It's full of silver bullets, Mort. I'll shoot you in the head."

"I left you three bullets," Mort D'Angel said. "I was told by Gault to leave you an empty gun. But I was a sentimental fool. You see what I said about friendship." He paused and smiled a little smile. "Do you have one left?"

"It's easy to find out, Mort. Go for your gun."

Mort looked at the girl. "I told you," he said, "he was much man." He turned to Edgar. "We were talking about you," he explained.

"And Jonathan Gault talked about *you*!" Edgar lied. "It's all finished. And you are finished, too."

Mort looked at the gun, at Edgar. "I wonder . . ."

"Turn the herd, Mort. Send back word to turn the cattle. Take his gun, Candy. Ride beside him and take his gun."

The girl, her eyes shining, brought her horse alongside the black-coated figure, reached under his long coat, and pulled the gun from its holster. She gave it to Edgar, her eyes wide with wonder.

"Fire three times," Mort said finally. "They'll turn 'em."

"If it brings armed men to help you," Edgar said, "you'll have silver in your brain. Or lead. Lead will do as well if I miss the chain-mail waistcoat, won't it, Mort?"

"You know about that?"

"Chain mail or something like it. How else can you take a bullet in the chest?"

Mort laughed for the first time since Edgar had encountered him. "You make bigger magic than I do, Gar," he said finally. "The shirt was an ingenious idea, I thought. Evolved by a white man I met in Haiti. The natives worshipped him almost as a god."

Edgar threw away his own empty gun.

"Your gun was empty?" the girl said, and her voice broke with the realization.

Mort said, softly, "He was clothed in valor, my dear, and, as

I have told him, love is a powerful weapon."

Behind them the top of the moving column had come to a halt. Some of the Indian drivers were riding up.

"There may be difficulties," D'Angel said. "Superstition was enough to keep my Indians in order before the raid. But now they have something else. The smell of gold in their nostrils. It may not be easy to make them give up the cattle."

"You can persuade them," Edgar said.

D'Angel talked to the Indians. Edgar listened, knowing Candace's eyes never left him, but not daring to take his from D'Angel. The black-coated man spoke rapidly in Spanish and the Indians listened without expression. The words formed themselves into long, lilting cadences like some savage song, and Edgar thought he understood how simple people might believe in silver bullets and the superhuman might of one man.

Even so, the deciding argument was not the man's who called himself Mort D'Angel. It was the sight of a line of men, ant-size in the distance, riding over a hill far to the south. One of the Indians pointed and D'Angel spoke quickly. The Indian turned and kicked his horse to a run on the slippery floor of the valley. In a moment another followed. After that, they broke like frightened deer.

D'Angel looked thoughtfully at the line of men riding hard far to the south. Then he turned to Edgar, and the curtain of opaqueness was down from his grey eyes. "My life may not seem valuable to you, but it is to me and I will give you something in return for it. Eight thousand of these." He jerked his head at the cattle.

"Thank you," Edgar told him. "But you only stole them a few hours ago. We would say in Philadelphia that your title is a little cloudy."

"They're yours," said D'Angel, "and the land we are on now." He pulled the big stallion around, facing north. "Look through Gault's papers for Elisha Farrow's title." He spurred his horse, but Edgar shouted at him and he stopped.

"You left me three bullets," he said. "Three empty chambers and then three bullets. You gave me my life then, or a chance for it. Why did you do that?"

Mort D'Angel thought about it a moment. "Gault lured you out on the futile pursuit of our men the night of the party. By mistake, he caught Streeter and Heath. He'd seen you and Miss Forest, there in the garden. So he brought Streeter and Heath back and left you to guard them. He purposely didn't tie them, and of course they got away. It gave him a perfect excuse to hang you."

"I figured that," Edgar said. "But why did you leave me three bullets?"

Mort D'Angel let his eyes fall and the truth came hard from him. "I hoped you would kill Gault," he said. "And then it would save a split with him in San Francisco."

He held up his hand as Edgar started to speak. "That is a little of it, but not all." He looked at Edgar and Candace. "You were a coward, a timid man, and then you fell in love and you became a brave man—braver far than I, for I seldom feel fear. You may not have known those things, but I knew them, and I wanted you to have the woman that made you what you are now."

Edgar looked at him a long time. And he looked into himself. Then he looked at Candace. "You are," he said at last, "the only honest man I've ever known."

He threw the outlaw the loaded gun that Candace had taken from him. "Good-by and good luck, amigo," he said softly.

Mort D'Angel blinked twice. He stuck the gun in his holster, tried once more to speak, and failed. He raised his hand in a salute and dug his big horse with his spurs.

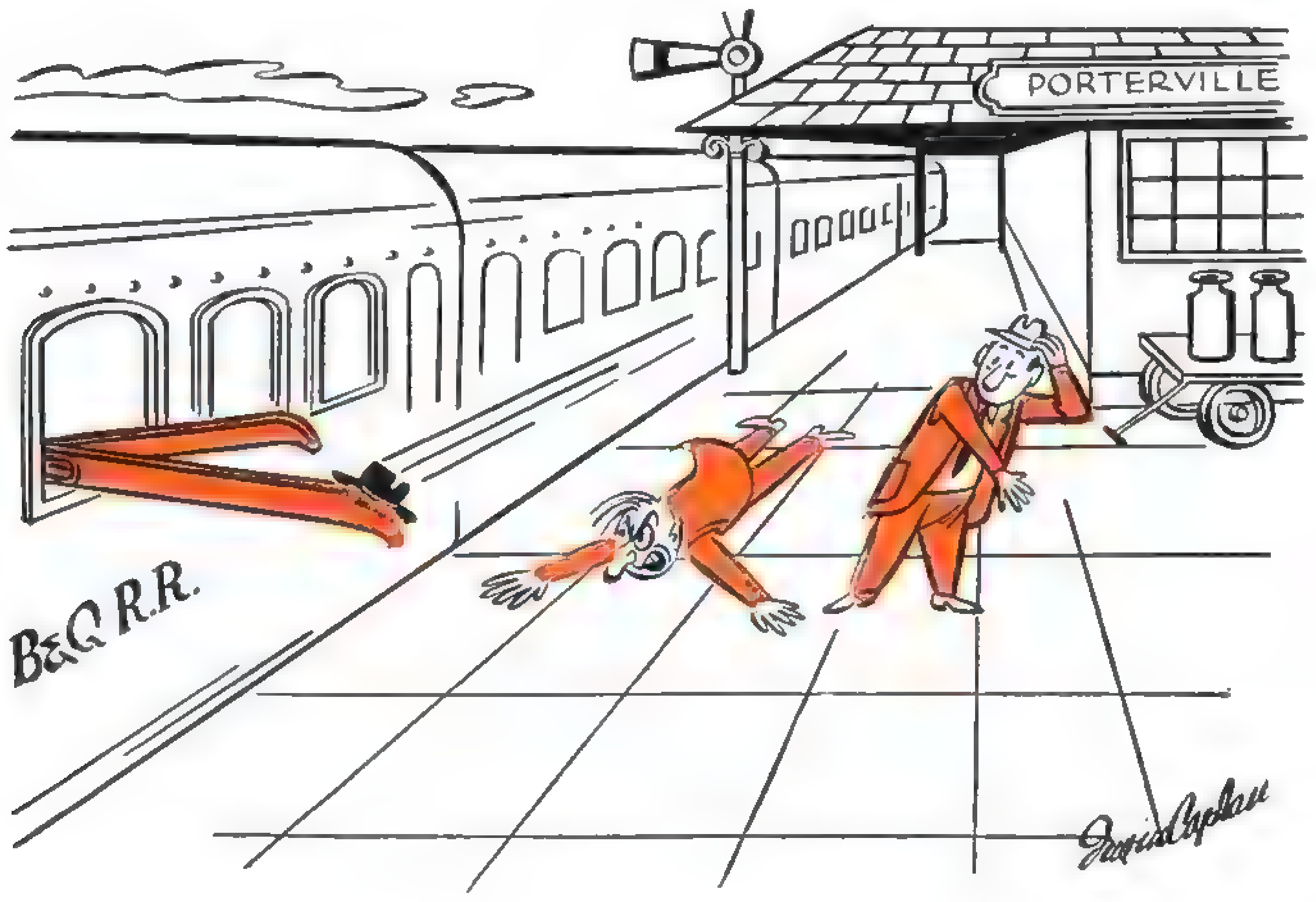
Edgar looked up and saw Major Forest galloping toward them at the head of the column. "Gault isn't dead," he said quietly. "At the final instant I couldn't kill him . . ."

The girl was beside Edgar and her arms were up and she was leaning perilously in her saddle. "As if I cared," she said.

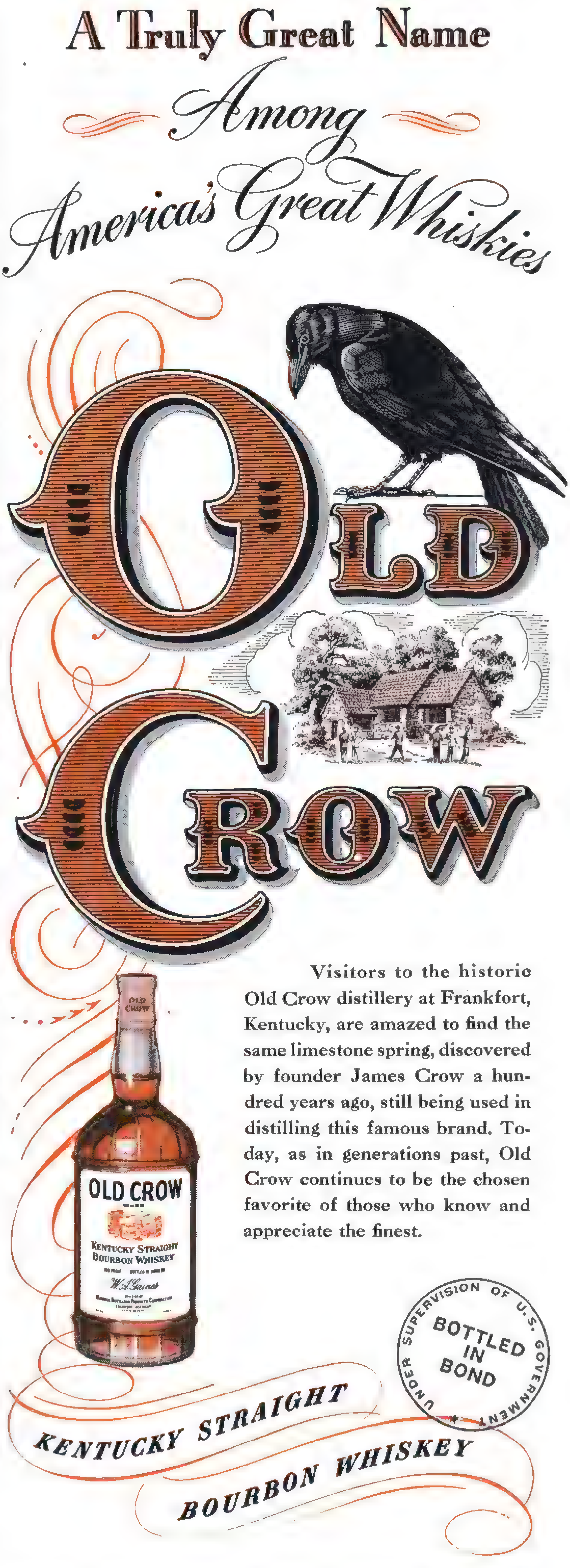
Two Indians rode by, heading for their hills, abandoning the herd. They stopped and stared at Edgar, then bowed and made a sign. Edgar released Candace, blushingly, and said wrathfully in English, "Now what?"

One of the Indians pointed and said gravely to the other, "It is as Mort D'Angel said just now. The new god prevails with an empty gun and rides barefoot when it rains." ⧺

Continued from page 51



"Those damn ski trains!"



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The Case of Lela Cade

Continued from page 71

a man with a dead pan that held no smile and no surprise. He was the sawed-off man I had seen at the bar; remembering this, I felt the knots in my stomach tighten.

I stood up quickly. "I'm waiting for Miss Cade," I said. He stood there, his hands in the pockets of his dark suit. He had straight, polished black hair sitting low on his brow. His nose was too long and his mouth too small and too nervous.

"Who are you?" I demanded.

He studied me carefully. Then he waved the door key in front of me. "You got a key?" he asked.

"I haven't," I admitted.

"I have," he said sharply. "So let me ask the questions—like who the hell are you?"

"Joe Smith."

"Don't be funny," he warned.

"Are you the house detective?" I asked, wanting to play innocent.

He waved the key at me. "Sure, I'm the house detective—and this is a gun." He took three steps toward me. "What's your name?"

I took one step, one easy step, and that's all. The rest of the steps were downward, fast and downward. I fell down a million steps, down and down into a dark cellar, a bottomless cellar with bones and knuckles scattered all through the painful darkness.

Sunlight and softness felt good, and the nurse, who wasn't pretty at all, looked like the most beautiful of women. The white room smelled of starch and disinfectant, and I inhaled a scent as sweet as roses and lilacs. My head was swathed in bandages, my eyes hurt, my mouth and jaw pained me, but it was good to be alive.

I coughed to hear the sound of a cough.

"How do you feel?" the nurse asked.

"I don't know."

"Try to get some more sleep."

"What time did I go to bed?"

The nurse grinned. "You were brought into the hospital at two-fifteen this morning."

"From where?"

"You were found on the beach. Near Fifth Street."

Fifth Street was three miles from the Tropical Coast Hotel.

"Get a little more sleep," the nurse urged.

So I shut my eyes and pretended to sleep. In the darkness I found my memory. It was easy to recall the sawed-off man with the key, but I dismissed him from my mind. I thought only of Lela Cade and of the first time I had seen her. I lay there remembering how it had all begun.

New York was a city of wide-open windows, and, as I stood before my open bathroom window drying myself with a Turkish towel, I studied the burning East Fifties, the design of the Queensboro Bridge, and the green rhythms of the East River. When I turned and looked the other way, I saw the August sun falling beyond the mountain chain of skyscrapers.

The heat didn't trouble me. It only made me remember Louisiana and some military pinpoints in Africa and Asia where the climate was always war hot. All this, however, was past, and I could only think that Manhattan was heaven and that heaven could never really be hot.

Then, altogether unexpected, came the sound of fingers drumming at my door. As I slipped into my robe, I told myself it was a mistake, for I knew nobody in town.

When I opened the door, I saw a young woman whose pretty face looked sapped from the heat.

"Yes?" My voice was weak, uncertain.

"Gin or Scotch?" Her voice was sultry, and there was only a suggestion of a smile on her face.

"I don't understand," I murmured.

"Do you like gin or Scotch?"

"Gin," I lied.

"Good. I only have gin. Hurry up."

I looked at her two-piece, candy-striped playsuit, but I said nothing.

She pointed. "Just across the hall. We're neighbors."

"I'll get dressed."

"Make it quick."

"Sure."

"Don't get lost," she whispered.

Ten minutes later I rapped on the door across the hall. As I waited for her to answer, I brushed some cigarette ashes from my sports shirt and slacks. I rapped again and nothing happened. I opened the door.

The shades were drawn, and the apartment was hot and dark and crowded with too much furniture. There was a grand piano in one corner. I heard jazz music emanating from a radio tuned low. Then I heard a noise in the kitchen.

She was standing at the sink trying to open a fifth of gin. Seeing me, she smiled.

"I knocked. Twice," I explained.

She came toward me and put the bottle in my hands. "You open it. You're stronger."

I grinned, opened the bottle, and placed it on the sink.

She suddenly caught my hands and held them. "You've got big hands."

Hers were small, and her bare feet were small too. She was a tall girl with delicate features, and with too much wild red hair.

"What should I mix?" I asked, as my eyes played over an empty Scotch bottle, an empty gin bottle, and several glasses containing only wet, stained cigarette butts.

"It's too hot to mix. Just find some glasses that don't leak."

She watched me as I cleaned two glasses and poured an inch of gin into each one. "Try again," she prodded.

For a second, I watched her brush some loose strands of hair away from her narrow, blue eyes. Then I doubled the drinks and handed one glass to her.

"Bring the bottle," she said as she started toward the living room.

She sat down on the davenport and pushed at a coffee table with her toes. "I have long legs," she explained; and then, before I sat down in a club chair near her, she finished her glass of gin.

She set the empty glass down, picked up a tiny bottle, and began to paint her fingernails. I sat there, watching her spread the orange polish with a small brush.

"Pour me a drink—please."

I got up and put two more inches of gin in her glass. "Enough?" I asked.

She looked away from her fingernails. “Good enough. Thanks.”

I sat down again, placed my drink on the floor, and fished for my cigarettes. “Smoke?”

She didn’t answer until she had finished her drink. “I don’t smoke. It’s bad for my voice.”

“How about drinking?” I asked, making conversation.

“I hate to drink by myself. Sometimes. Sometimes I don’t care. Today I do. That’s why I knocked on your door.”

“I’m glad you did,” I said, wiping my wet brow with a handkerchief.

“Are you hot?” she asked, looking squarely at me.

“I’ve been hotter.”

“Where?”

“Accra. Calcutta.”

“The war?”

“Yes.”

“You don’t have to tell me about it. I brought you over to drink—not to talk.”

I smoked, sipped gin, and watched her replace the brush in the bottle. Suddenly, her fingers flew apart and her hands rose high and motionless. “Fix me another drink, please,” she said.

I hesitated.

“My nails are wet,” she explained.

As I poured her drink, she watched the cigarette planted and burning in a corner of my mouth.

She said, “You like smoking better.”

I recorked the bottle. “Better than what?”

“Drinking.”

“No. I just take my time.”

“I don’t,” she said.

I finished my drink, and my throat was hot and sweet with warm gin. My eyes followed her long, tanned legs as she swung them onto the coffee table.

“I hope you’re not embarrassed,” she said.

“Not at all,” I assured her.

She arched her legs and ran her hands over her thighs. “I’m not ashamed of my body,” she declared. “I know I’ve got a nice body . . . What’s your name?”

“It’s Earl. Earl Keane.”

She said nothing. Slowly she arose, shook her head and the wild shock of hair, and bent down to grasp the neck of the gin bottle on the carpet near the coffee table. When she straightened up, she arched her back momentarily, and then came toward me. “Hold your glass up—Earl.”

I held it, and she poured the gin like water. Returning to the davenport, she sat down and emptied the bottle into her glass. For a moment she studied the label, and then, turning toward me, she said, “Only four-fifths of a quart. I wonder what happened to the old-fashioned quart.”

“Nothing’s the same any more,” I said.

“That must be it.” She lifted her glass, but this time she didn’t drink. She held it before her eyes and looked through the glass. “You look funny.” She giggled.

“I’m a funny man.”

“You look like you were soaked in gin.”

“What’s *your* name?” I asked.

She rose and came close to me. “You’re big,” she said. “Your hands are big—and strong. And you’re—you’re handsome. You’ve got nice—nice black hair and—and a strong—chin.” She made a small fist with her right hand and playfully hit my jaw. “I prefer my men—big—and—strong.”

Holding her glass as if it were a torch, she suddenly turned away from me and started toward the piano. She sat down, set the glass aside, and played a Gershwin melody with one finger.

She started to sing, low and husky, a few bars of *The Man I Love*.

I left my drink behind and sat down beside her.

The black and white keys were old pals of mine, and Gershwin was right down my alley. The moment I began to play, she stopped singing, took a token sip, and then, putting down her glass, said quickly, “Now then, professor.”

I played. And she sang. She sang with a sad, husky, melodious voice unmarred by gin. As I accompanied her, I thought I had heard her sing before. Theatres, night clubs, recreation halls, and juke boxes crossed my mind and told me nothing except that here was a big-league voice and that I had heard it somewhere before.

She held a high, sad note for a moment, and then the note faded. Her voice died. Her face was twisted with pain and her eyes were tightly shut. In a moment, her face relaxed, her eyes opened, and she reached for the glass. “You’re good, professor.” She finished the drink. “I like your style.”

She arose, blinked her eyes, and moved cautiously but unsteadily toward the table. I followed and stood behind her as she regarded the empty bottle. “What’s your name?” I asked again.

“Get the other bottle—in the kitchen.”

“What’s your name?”

She sank into the davenport. “Lela—Lela Cade. Get the bottle, professor.”

I went to the kitchen musing about Lela Cade and remembering how the name had looked on phonograph records and on printed cards on juke boxes. It took another minute before I was able to locate the other bottle, open it, and return to the living room.

Lela Cade’s head rested against the back of the davenport, her feet on the coffee table. She was fast asleep. I looked for my glass of gin. It was empty.

I sat down in the club chair and watched Lela Cade and everything in the room about her as if they belonged in a picture—not a picture for an art museum, but rather one for the pages of a tabloid newspaper. I tried to link the name of Lela Cade with some scandal, but I could think of none. I could only remember that it had been a long time since I had heard one of her records.

Then I thought only of Lela Cade as a woman; and, as I watched her now, I thought she was somebody to love, somebody who needed my love. She looked strangely beautiful, like a schoolgirl asleep on white sands beneath a hot sun. Bending over her, I lifted her into my arms and held her for a moment to see if she would wake up. I placed a pillow beneath her head, brushed a wisp of hair away from her left eye and then quietly left the apartment.

Two nights later, when I walked into the apartment house, I stopped to ask the night clerk whether there was any mail for Ralph Bargeron. Ralph had lent me his apartment while he was at Bar Harbor and had asked me to

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check daily for any messages or mail for him. The night clerk said, "Not a thing."

I lighted a cigarette. "How did the Reds make out?"

"What Reds?"

"Cincinnati."

He turned a few pages of his paper and then read aloud, "Cincinnati 2, Pittsburgh 1. You from Cincinnati?"

I nodded.

"Know a feller named Pete Werner?"

I said no. Then we talked about Cincinnati and New York and finally the hot weather. We agreed that all rooms in Manhattan needed air conditioning. "This is a high-class place," he assured me. "It takes dough to live here. Lots of celebrities live here."

When I appeared impressed and interested, he began to name a few. The fifth name he mentioned was Lela Cade.

"The blues singer?"

He nodded.

"Where's she singing now?"

"No place."

"How come?" I asked casually.

"She's a rummy. She loves that bottle. Didn't you hear about the stink she made?"

I explained that I had only recently come to New York.

"Oh, this happened about three years ago. At the Club Romanesco. She crowned Al Minsini with a big bottle of champagne. That finished her."

"Who's Al Minsini?"

The night clerk laughed at my ignorance. "He runs the Club Romanesco. Biggest night-club operator in town."

"Why'd she do it?" I asked.

He shrugged. "A rummy'll do anything, I guess. You know something? I've been working here for more than a year and I ain't seen her sober yet. And I hate rummy women. Don't you?"

I nodded in agreement and I don't believe he was aware that it was impossible for me to hate Lela Cade. I said good night and went toward the elevator. It occurred to me then that Lela Cade had hardly left my mind for a moment.

All the time I walked about Manhattan, I saw nothing and probably looked for nothing or no one but her. That very evening, I had sat in a small club in East Fifty-second Street listening to a young Negro pianist, but I had found myself thinking only of Lela. And the pianist was damn good. And so was the beer.

More days passed. They were long, hot, and disappointing days. Several times, I tried to get up enough nerve to rap on the door of Lela's apartment, but I never did. Then, one noon, as I was returning to the apartment house after taking a stroll near the East River, I saw Lela Cade again.

She was coming from the opposite direction, walking slowly. What struck me was her torn blue evening gown and the mink jacket hung limply in her left hand and brushing against the hot and dirty concrete.

At the entrance, I stopped and listened to the pounding of my heart. When she came within four feet of me, I smiled and said, "Good morning."

She looked at me—and through me. And then she pushed the door open and moved on as if she had never been accosted.

It rained the next day, and New York finally shut its windows, as it had shut its doors on me when I had gone hunting for a job at the piano. I sat at the window and watched umbrellas grow like mushrooms and float up and down the avenues. I was blue—the kind of blue that blends readily with the grey of rain clouds. The radio played light concert music and the violins cried. When the music stopped, an announcer spoke about the quality of a brand of canned soups and said the time was three o'clock. Hearing this, I thought about banks closing doors and tellers closing the windows of their cages. All that seemed far away, but it hung over me like a threat.

Then the telephone rang.

A woman's voice asked, "Earl?"

I shivered. "Yes."

"This is Lela. Come right over—dear."

"What?"

"It's important." She hung up.

Slowly I replaced my phone, lighted a cigarette, and left my apartment. I rapped once on Lela's door and she opened it quickly. Immediately she took my arm, kissed me lightly on the lips, and then led me toward the center of the room, toward a stern but attractive brunette sitting stiffly on the davenport.

"Dear, I want you to meet Mrs. Benstone," Lela said.

I muttered, "How do you do."

Mrs. Benstone wore a crimson beret and checkered raincoat. Her face was tense and her full red lips quavered perceptibly. She studied me carefully and suspiciously. Finally she said, "I'm happy to know you—Mr. Keane."

Lela said, "Sit down, dear."

I sat down in the same chair I had occupied the first time I had visited Lela.

Mrs. Benstone said, "Miss Cade has been telling me about you."

Not knowing what this was all about, I could only smile and pretend to be pleased. Then I glanced toward Lela, who sat down at the other end of the davenport. It was obvious that she was ill at ease and badly in need of a drink. Nevertheless, she looked beautiful in blue lounging pajamas. "Would you mix some drinks, dear?" she said.

I started to rise, but Mrs. Benstone stopped me. "Just a moment, Mr. Keane," she said sharply. "I don't mean to be rude, but this isn't a social visit."

Lela looked sick. And I could feel the tension in my stomach. I sat back and lit a cigarette.

"Miss Cade tells me that you two are planning to be married," Mrs. Benstone said, eying me strongly.

I listened to the sound of her cultured voice and to the driving of the rain. Then I forced a thin smile. "That's right," I heard myself say, and I wondered how white and how good was the lie.

Mrs. Benstone seemed to relax momentarily. "I didn't believe Miss Cade when she told me a few moments ago," she said. "That's why she called you. I'm sorry if I've inconvenienced you."

"It's all right," I said, my eyes moving from Mrs. Benstone to Lela.

"You see, Mr. Keane, I had an idea that Miss Cade, in her own inimitable way, was trying to steal my husband," Mrs. Benstone

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continued in a slow, quiet voice.

Lela protested. "That's silly."

"Is it?" Mrs. Benstone turned toward me. "I left my good manners at home, Mr. Keane. And I'm not a bit sorry. I know Miss Cade has been seeing too much of my husband and I don't like it. And I don't care who knows it—not even you."

Lela rushed out to the kitchen. A glass clattered.

I stared Mrs. Benstone down. "You're wrong. You must be."

Her eyes widened. "Why?"

"Lela couldn't be seeing too much of your husband. At least not lately. Not lately enough to matter."

Mrs. Benstone crossed her legs and opened her raincoat. "You sound very sure of yourself."

"Lela and I are going to team up. You see, I play the piano and write music. Lela and I know we're going places together. That's why I'm sure of myself—and of Lela."

The moment I uttered those words, I saw Lela framed in the doorway to the kitchen. She stood there, a glass of gin in her right hand, a sardonic smile on her face.

Mrs. Benstone looked pensive for a while. "When a woman passes thirty, she can't be sure about any man. I hope you understand that, Mr. Keane."

There was a note of penitence in her voice, and now, for the first time, I felt I was convincing her of how wrong she was. Suddenly, she asked, "Do you know my husband?"

"I don't."

"Hasn't Miss Cade mentioned him to you?"

"Look, Mrs. Benstone," I said. "Lela and I don't discuss the past. At least not very much. We're more interested in the future. And I don't think your husband is a part of that future."

Lela, her eyes upon me, crossed the room and sat down on the piano bench. "Can I get you a drink, Mrs. Benstone?" she asked.

Mrs. Benstone shook her head. "No, thank you. I must be going." She got up, slowly buttoned her raincoat, and started toward the door. Lela didn't move. She continued to sit on the bench and sip gin. Quickly, I arose and stood by to see Mrs. Benstone to the door. At that instant, a key noisily entered the keyhole.

I saw the blood leave Lela's face, and then I watched the door open. The man who entered was too tall, too thin, and perhaps too calm. I knew almost instinctively that he was Mrs. Benstone's husband. His handsome, mustached face seemed in a quick instant to recognize the tension and rise above it. As he stared at Mrs. Benstone, he didn't register surprise or shock, but rather disdain.

Mrs. Benstone whimpered; she looked ugly with horror. Abruptly, she turned away from the man at the door, scanned the room with wild eyes, and rushed toward the coffee table. I saw her grab a small pair of scissors that Lela had used for her nails, and I rushed at her and caught her hand as she tried to slash her left wrist. I twisted the scissors from her hand, and she fought and sobbed hysterically until she knew her efforts were futile.

The tall, thin man said, "Let her go. I'll take her home." He grabbed her by the shoulders. "Stop crying!" he shouted. "For God's sake, stop it!"

Mrs. Benstone wailed and shook her head until the red beret fell from it. Bending down, Benstone retrieved the beret and then, holding his wife by the arm, he started out of the apartment. At the door, he paused and glanced toward Lela, who seemed to be concerned only with gin.

Once the door was shut, Lela picked up the scissors. With her fingers, she wiped blood from the blades, and then scowled at me.

"Why'd you stop her?" she said. "Why didn't you let her kill herself?"

She was close to me now, and I could smell the gin on her breath and see anger in her eyes. I was angry too; and she knew it when she felt my hand slap her cheek. I slapped her again and again. She winced and shut her eyes, and she didn't see me as I rushed to the door. I wanted to get the hell out of the apartment. I wanted to walk around in the rain and get clean.

"Earl!"

She caught me just as I opened the door. She caught me with her arms and held me with a deep kiss that tasted of gin and a little bit of love. For a fleeting moment, there was no rain, no Benstones, no time, and no place.

When Lela pulled her head away, there were tears in her eyes. "Don't go, Earl," she said. "I'm sorry."

I didn't go. I poured a drink for myself and then sat with her

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Frank BEAVEN

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on the davenport. She folded her legs under and watched me light a cigarette and blow the smoke through her disheveled hair. Then she reached for the bottle. I caught her hand.

"Why?" I demanded.

Lela looked bored. "To blur out images."

"What images?"

"Images of the past."

"What past?"

Lela examined her fingernails. "A clip joint in Atlantic City. Getting customers drunk. Taking a cut on all the drinks sold. Entertaining men—butter-and-egg men who smelled from—butter and eggs. I hated them. I couldn't stand them unless . . ."

"Unless you blurred out the images," I concluded for her.

Lela nodded. "I wanted to sing. Very much. One night I got the chance—on the three-o'clock show. And the little girl from Mays Landing, New Jersey, made good."

"I've heard some of your records," I said.

Lela fingered her hair and brushed it behind her small ears. "Slats Benstone made me what I am today. He owned the clip joint. The Club Araby. A small club—but a big image. Know why I made good—as they say in the story books?"

"Why?"

She laughed, briefly. "When I'd sing those blues numbers, I'd look at the man I loved—Slats Benstone. That's why I was such a big hit. Oh—we were in love all right—terribly in love."

Lela moved until her head rested on my lap. Then, taking the glass from my hand, she took a sip. "What about you?" she asked. "Where are you from?"

"I'm from Cincinnati, Ohio."

"I'll bet you weren't born there."

"I worked there. In a bank."

"A banker?"

"A teller," I admitted.

"You didn't like the bank. You didn't like Cincinnati. And now . . . How come I always find you at home?"

"I just sit there—waiting for you," I answered sharply, as I poured drinks for each of us.

"Say that once more," Lela said softly, "and I'll believe you."

I took my drink and went to the piano. As I began to play, Lela said, "And there are no pianos in banks, are there?"

I struck some chords with my left hand. "That's why I came to New York."

"For Carnegie Hall?"

I laughed and shook my head. "For atmospheric little gin mills, where you play old songs on old pianos—and drink aged beer. I'm looking for a job at the piano."

Lela finished her drink. "That's all?"

"That's all," I muttered.

She stood up and eased toward the piano. When I moved over, she sat down beside me on the bench. She appeared thoughtful. "Do you like me, Earl?" she said.

"I like you, Lela."

For a moment she hesitated, and then said, "I just had a pleasant thought."

"What?"

"That maybe I like you too."

My eyes were on the keyboard, and the white and black keys blended to a filmy grey. Then I pulled her toward me, so close that she could hear the sound of my heart. We twisted in an embrace, and my left elbow pounded the piano and a discord rose and fell with the rain.

That was in the afternoon. Late that night, as I lay awake in bed thinking about Lela Cade, I heard a persistent rapping on the door. I pulled the cord on the bed lamp, slipped into my bathrobe, and answered the door. It was Lela.

She was pale and childish with fright. When I shut the door, she moved into my arms until I could feel the quivering of her body.

"What's wrong, Lela?"

"Earl—let's go away." She sounded frantic.

"What's happened?"

"You said something before, Earl. In the afternoon, in my apartment—something about going away."

"What's happened?" I insisted.

"Nothing. Nothing, Earl. I just want to go away."

I didn't say anything for a while. Then: "Where do you want to go?" I asked.

"Anywhere. Any place at all. With you—Earl."

"You know what I'm talking about, don't you?"

"Yes, Earl. I love you. I love you so much."

Lela said it as if she meant it, and when she kissed me I knew that she herself was all the meaning and all the passion in the world for me. As I held her close, I could only feel that I wanted her and would never let her go.

The dirt road had too many ruts, and the college kid who drove the hired car enjoyed every bump. Lela didn't. She had had four Martinis on the train, and now she looked somewhat sick. But, even so, she turned to me and started to smile. She held up her left hand and studied the gold wedding band on the third finger. Then, with her right hand, she played with the ring, slipping it off and on her finger.

"Is it loose?" I asked.

Lela laughed. "No—it's just easy. Very easy."

I didn't comment. I didn't like the gesture or her attitude, but I knew she wasn't wrong. It was all so easy, and I knew damn well that with the same ease our hasty marriage could land on the rocks and smash me with it. But I quickly forgot about this when Lela moved into my arms and I breathed the wind after it had swept through her hair.

I watched the afternoon sun darting through the wooded terrain as we approached Lake Seven, its cool blue waters held quietly by the rugged Adirondacks. When we reached the Lake Seven general store, we dismissed the hired car and Lela and I went into the store to make arrangements to rent a cabin for two weeks.

A half-hour later, we stepped into a canoe, loaded down with our luggage, sundry groceries, two bottles of California champagne, and five bottles of gin—all different brands—demanded by Lela.

I kept looking at Lela as I paddled the canoe. She appeared more radiant than ever, and very beautiful in her white peasant blouse and printed dirndl skirt. We passed a few canoes in the belly of the lake, and then, after two miles, it suddenly seemed as if we were alone in the vastness of lake, forests, and mountains.

Lela rubbed her shoulders with crossed hands and smiled. "I'm getting cold, Earl."

I lifted the paddle out of the water, balanced it across the canoe, and then removed my coat and handed it to Lela. She placed it over her shoulders; I liked the way it looked on her and the way it reminded me she was my wife.

"It gets much colder at night," I said.

"How do you know?" Lela asked softly, as she allowed the forefinger of her right hand to touch and cut through the water.

"Jack told me," I said. Jack Fellows, a G.I. buddy of mine, had told me about Lake Seven one hot, sultry night in Accra. At the time, it had sounded like a heaven I would never visit.

For a moment, Lela said nothing as she continued to regard the scenery and breathe the cool, fresh air. Then she smiled languidly at me and said, "I can understand why you wanted to come."

Soon I spied our cabin. A new smile appeared on my face as I pointed to it. "Lela—look!"

"I see nothing but trees," she complained.

"It's right in among the trees."

The log cabin was about twenty feet from the edge of the lake, and as I watched it I seemed to remember the sound of Jack's voice as he had described the place, and I could only think that it was more beautiful than I had imagined it would be.

I maneuvered the canoe to a small, wooden wharf. Lela stepped out onto the wharf and helped me unload our luggage and the two big cartons containing our groceries. After I had secured the canoe, Lela and I, unburdened by any baggage, ran toward the cabin. As we came to the screened porch, we suddenly stopped, looked at each other, and kissed. Then I lifted Lela to carry her across the threshold. There were small tears in her eyes.

The door opened into a big room with a stone fireplace, a plain maple table, and chairs. There were two single windows on the left wall where the fireplace was situated. The right wall was broken by a door that led to a small bedroom, in which there were a double bed, an old-fashioned elliptical mirror hanging over a chest of drawers, and a coat-and-hat tree. There were also two windows in the bedroom. The kitchen, complete with a stove that used cylinder gas for fuel, and the pantry were situated in the back of the cabin. All the rooms had their walls finished in knotty pine. Light was available from the sun, by day, and from kerosene lamps, by night.

I saw all these things for myself before night fell—and after Lela allowed me to escape from her arms.

The yellow light of the kerosene lamp on the table touched the two bottles of champagne and fell across the beauty of Lela's face. Two moths danced above the light for us, and the forest sang its night song to tell us that we were far from the highways and crossroads of man.

We were hungry at supper, and we ate with campfire appetites. We drank tomato juice, sipped onion soup, and ate two thick and juicy porterhouse steaks. With it all, we had the champagne, countless cigarettes with our coffee, and words of nonsense, small, easy talk, and little jests without barbs.

Lela's peasant blouse couldn't stay the cold of night, and I gave her my old Army field jacket. She wore it as proudly as if it were an ermine wrap. As I watched the way the strands of her red hair fell over the field jacket, I thought of dreams once as constant as the war and knew the dreams had come true. After supper, I lighted a fire in the fireplace. We extinguished the light in the kerosene lamp and sat together on the wood floor in front of the fire. After a few moments, Lela removed the field jacket and made a pillow of it.

"Lie beside me, Earl," she whispered.

We went to bed early and slept soundly. Shortly before dawn, I awoke. Lela was fast asleep, her body curled and her arms and head beneath the blankets. Only a shock of her hair showed. It had no color in the dark, but it had substance and a scent of perfumed soap.

The darkness slowly lifted, and almost as slowly and silently I eased away from Lela's warm body and out of the comfortable bed. I slipped out of the bedroom and went straight to a chair near the fireplace where our clothes had been discarded the night before. As I dressed hurriedly, I kept watching the dead fire and remembering it as it had been. After I had buttoned my field jacket, I went to the kitchen, gathered up the five bottles of gin, and left the house by the back door.

About fifty yards behind the house, I dug a hole with a dead branch and buried the five bottles. Once the hole was covered and properly camouflaged, I stood there looking at it for a long moment. Then, quickly, I bent down and uncovered the hole. I grabbed each bottle in turn by the neck and smashed it against the closest tree trunk. When I had covered the hole again, my hands were cold and muddy and sweet with the smell of gin.

Fifteen minutes later, I was paddling the canoe toward the deep of the lake. A half mile from the house, I placed the paddle in the shell of the canoe and busied myself with a fishing rod. I felt good. It was a fine morning and life sang. In less than an hour, I had caught one lake trout, two whitefish, and one sunfish. None of them weighed close to a pound but, because there was enough for breakfast, I put the rod aside and began to paddle swift and straight for the shore.

Lela was still asleep when I got back to the cabin. I had fried the fish and was opening a can of tomato juice when, in a sleepy voice, she finally called my name.

"Good morning, Mrs. Keane," I said, going into the bedroom.

Lela beamed and shook the hair out of her eyes. "Say that again," she begged.

I did. And I kissed her. And sat down beside her.

"What's my husband doing?"

"Smell."

Lela breathed deeply. "Fish."

"Right."

"You went fishing?" She yawned and stretched her arms.

I nodded. "One lake trout, two

Continued on page 116

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whitefish, and one sunfish."

She frowned. "You should have taken me."

"I wanted to surprise you—and have breakfast ready."

"You didn't have to. But I love you for it."

The breakfast was a success. The fish had everything but a fancy French name and we cleaned them to the thin, small bones. The potatoes were good, the tomato juice refreshing. Only the coffee was bad. It tasted like Army coffee.

Later, we decided to explore the lake in our canoe. We took along bathing suits, sandwiches, cigarettes, and several cans of fruit juice. We stayed out until late afternoon, gaping at the wonders of the lake and the mountain region. Then, tired out, we came back to the cabin. I was busying myself with the fire when Lela asked a question—a question that cut into my consciousness.

"Darling," she said, "where's the gin?"

I didn't answer her. Methodically, I lighted a cigarette and threw the burning match into the fireplace. My throat felt dry, and my heart pounded wildly.

Lela stood in the doorway of the kitchen, her face still relaxed, still filled with love and beauty. "I can't find the gin." She was smiling.

I smiled back. "What gin?"

The smile ebbed. "We bought five bottles—yesterday."

"We were married yesterday."

Lela's eyes never left me as she slowly stepped toward me. Swiftly, she threw her arms about me and kissed me. Then, with her arms still locked about my neck, she put on an impish frown. "Come clean, Macduff," she said.

I threw my hands to the ceiling. "Search me."

She tickled me and we laughed. "Let's have a drink, darling."

"Tomato juice?"

Lela slipped out of my arms. She brushed her hair behind her ears. "Enough is enough. Where's the gin?"

"No gin," I muttered.

The hard lines became visible on Lela's face. "Where is it?" she snapped.

"We have none," I told her bluntly. "I broke every bottle."

"You . . ." She stopped. There were no other words, because her mouth and face were twisted in rage—and in hatred. She slapped my face, rushed off to the bedroom and slammed the door.

Slowly, I left the house and walked toward the edge of the lake. I stood there and tossed pebbles into the quiet waters, feeling that each pebble was a seed of happiness. A few minutes later, she came to me there. She took hold of my left hand, opened the fist, and allowed four pebbles to fall to the ground. "We shouldn't quarrel, darling," she said softly.

"We shouldn't," I agreed.

"It's getting cool." Lela looked across the lake.

I nodded.

"Let's go in the cabin," she suggested.

We walked back together, arm in arm and in step. My spirits soared cautiously, like a fledgling trying its wings.

Once in the cabin, we spread a blanket on the floor near the fireplace and Lela rested her head in my lap. The logs crackled and the flames writhed uneasily.

"Darling." Lela sounded pensive.

"Yes?"

"Can I ask you something?"

"Sure."

Lela paused, obviously to frame her question. When she uttered it, she closed her eyes. "Darling, would you deny me a drink—one drink—if you had it, and if I asked you for it?"

I considered this with a sense of detachment. I made believe her query was academic. "I would not."

Lela opened her eyes and smiled. "Then please—please give me—one drink."

A tremor went through my body and left me tense. "I can't," I muttered.

"One drink," she pleaded, holding my face in her small hands.

"I broke the bottles."

Dark fear distended her eyes. "Not all of them!"

"All of them," I admitted, pain in my voice.

For a long and terrible moment she let me see the hatred in her eyes, and then she arose quickly. "You no-good fool!" she said. "I hate the sight of you!" Her voice was awesome now, and I dared not turn to see her face. "You cheap bank clerk!"

My hands were trembling, but I said nothing.

"Let's pack."

The words spun my body about. I stared at Lela and said, "Pack what?"

"We're going back to New York. Tonight." Her mouth quavered and her face twitched.

I shook my head.

"Yes, we are," she insisted.

"Thirteen more days," I countered.

"For you maybe, but not for me."

"You're wrong, Lela."

"No, you're wrong. What are you trying to do to me?"

"Something you should have done a . . ."

"Shut up! I don't want a sermon. I want a drink! A drink!" She stalked out to the bedroom and slammed the door behind her.

The sun fell away with a strange suddenness, and the wind gave voice to the great forests. I placed another log on the fire and then sat down in a chair, faced the door to the bedroom, and listened to Lela gathering her belongings and stuffing them into her valises.

The bedroom door opened and Lela stood there, holding a suitcase in each hand and contempt in both eyes. "I'm ready," she announced.

"I'm not."

"Just to the general store. Just take me that far," she said harshly.

I pretended I hadn't heard her, for my mind was made up. I wasn't letting Lela go, at least not without a struggle.

"Don't take me. I'll take the canoe myself," she said resolutely, as she started toward the front door. Quickly, I jumped up, hurried to the door ahead of Lela, and ran toward the landing.

As I dragged the canoe away from the landing and toward the house, I saw Lela standing in the doorway, and I heard a voice and words I had never wanted to hear. I kept dragging the canoe around to the side of the cabin. Then I walked quickly to the landing again, picked up the paddle, and returned to the cabin. Lela blocked the doorway.

"Get inside," I ordered. I pushed her inside and slammed the door behind us. "We paid two weeks' rent," I said, taking her valises and carrying them to the bedroom.

She followed me and stood at the door, scowling. "Take your stuff out of here," she said. "This is *my* room."

"You're my wife."

"Don't be so damned naïve!"

I knew there was no dissuading her, and I decided not to press the issue. The night could be long and cold and lonely; but I wouldn't mind too much, not as long as Lela was still in the cabin; not as long as the forest, the mountains, the lake, the wind, and I had a chance to help her find herself. And perhaps me.

After I had cleared my belongings from the bedroom, Lela slammed the door shut. I dropped my things in a far corner of the front room, lighted a kerosene lamp, and went to the kitchen to prepare supper. I opened a can of clam chowder and a can of corned beef hash, fried four eggs sunny-side up, and boiled some coffee. Then I rapped on the door to the bedroom and shouted, "Supper's on the table."

Lela's voice came through the door. "Eat it yourself!"

I said, "You don't have to talk to me. Just eat."

"Go away—go cash a check for somebody."

I ate my supper alone. I had no appetite, but I ate for strength—for a strength that I knew I needed to fight Lela. I cashed a million checks and spent a million minutes in a Cincinnati bank. When, at last, my mind fled from Cincinnati and warmed itself before the fireplace, all I could remember was that this was a cold night in August and that there was trouble in Eden. Finally, I lay down on a blanket and tried to shut Lela out of my mind and find sleep.

I heard the crackling of the fire, the swishing of the wind, and the rhapsodic sounds of the forest. But from Lela's room there came no sound. I lay with my back toward the fire and with my eyes trained on the door to the bedroom. The door eased out of focus as sleep came.

The door!

It was wide open and the bedroom was dark. I bolted up from the floor, blinked my eyes, and shook clarity into my head. Then I saw what I feared I would continue to see in myriad nightmares. The bed was empty. The room was empty.

"Lela!"

The house was empty. Outside I found the canoe where I had left it. Everything was where I had left it—the water in the lake, the trees in the forest, the stars in the sky.

I stood at the landing and called her name again. Quickly, I turned and ran back to the house, looked for the flashlight in the kitchen, and found it was gone.

I went out the back door and ran frantically into the woods, straining my eyes for a beam of light, and wondering if Lela really had the nerve to trek through the nightbound forest to reach a state highway two miles from our cabin. Unable to move swiftly because of the undergrowth, I let my voice race ahead of me. The voice was distraught, and I felt I must be frightening the unseen animals. There was no room for fear in *me*. There was too much tension, too much pain, and too much fear for Lela.

Then I saw it! Standing on high ground, I saw a wavering beam of light. I shouted and ran and shouted again. Then the earth side-stepped me and I fell headlong. Something clawed my face and burned my left eye. I lay there for a moment waiting for the world to end, and then I tossed aside the sharp, broken branch, got to my feet, and kept driving my legs toward the light.

Lela Cade was standing still, looking crazy with fear, when I reached her. She was happy to see me; she would have been happy to see anyone who could lead her to shelter.

Then, with a sadness in her voice, she said, "You're hurt."

I said nothing. I took the flashlight, held her cold hand, and led her back to the cabin.

The next morning, my left eye wouldn't open. It was red and several hues of blue and purple when I examined it in my shaving mirror. Also, a crooked cut ran from the left side of my mouth halfway up my forehead. Outside, it was raining—a wet, welcome rain that I hoped would fall for days.

Several times during that day, I tried to talk to Lela, but she simply looked through me and

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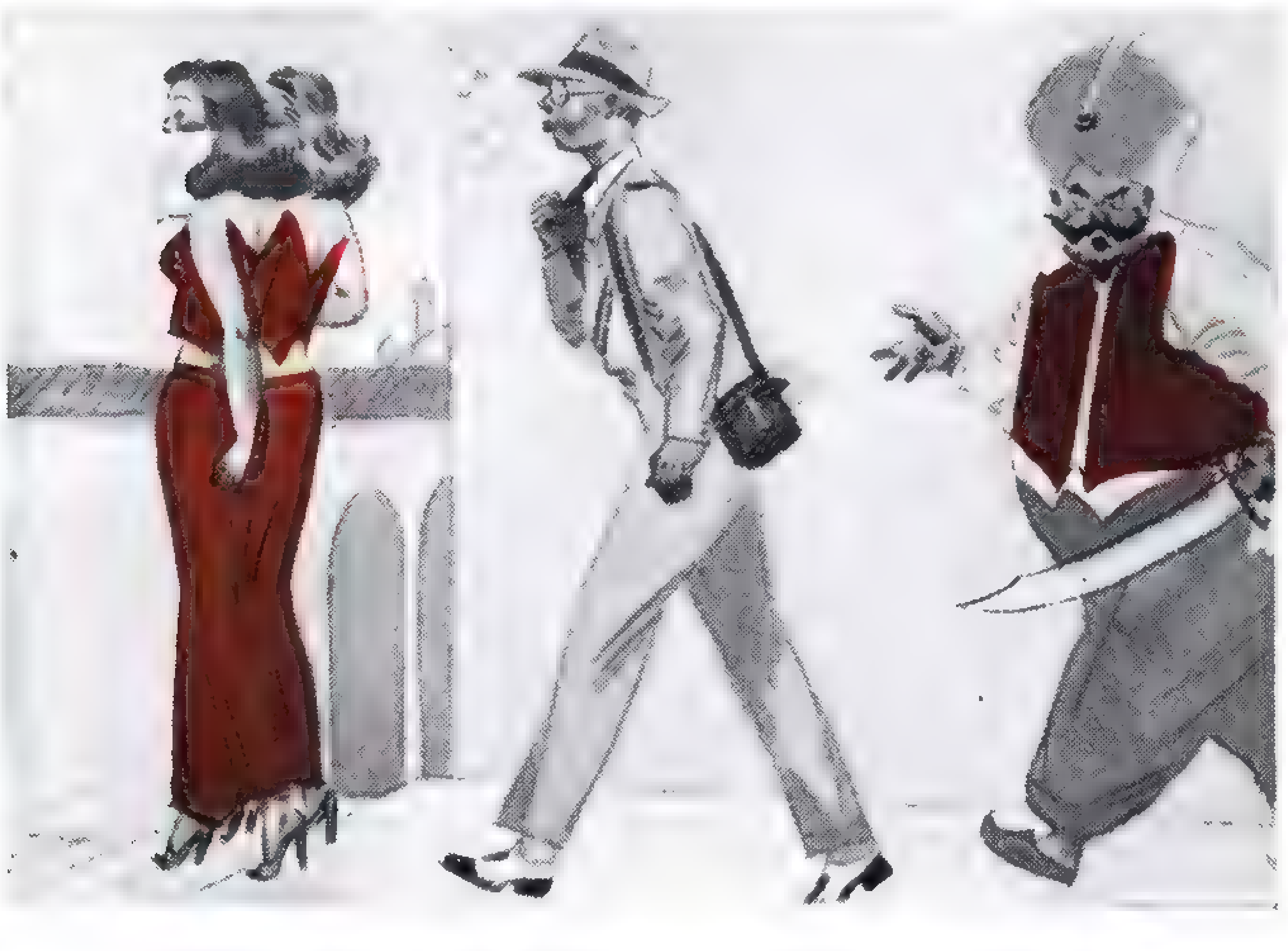

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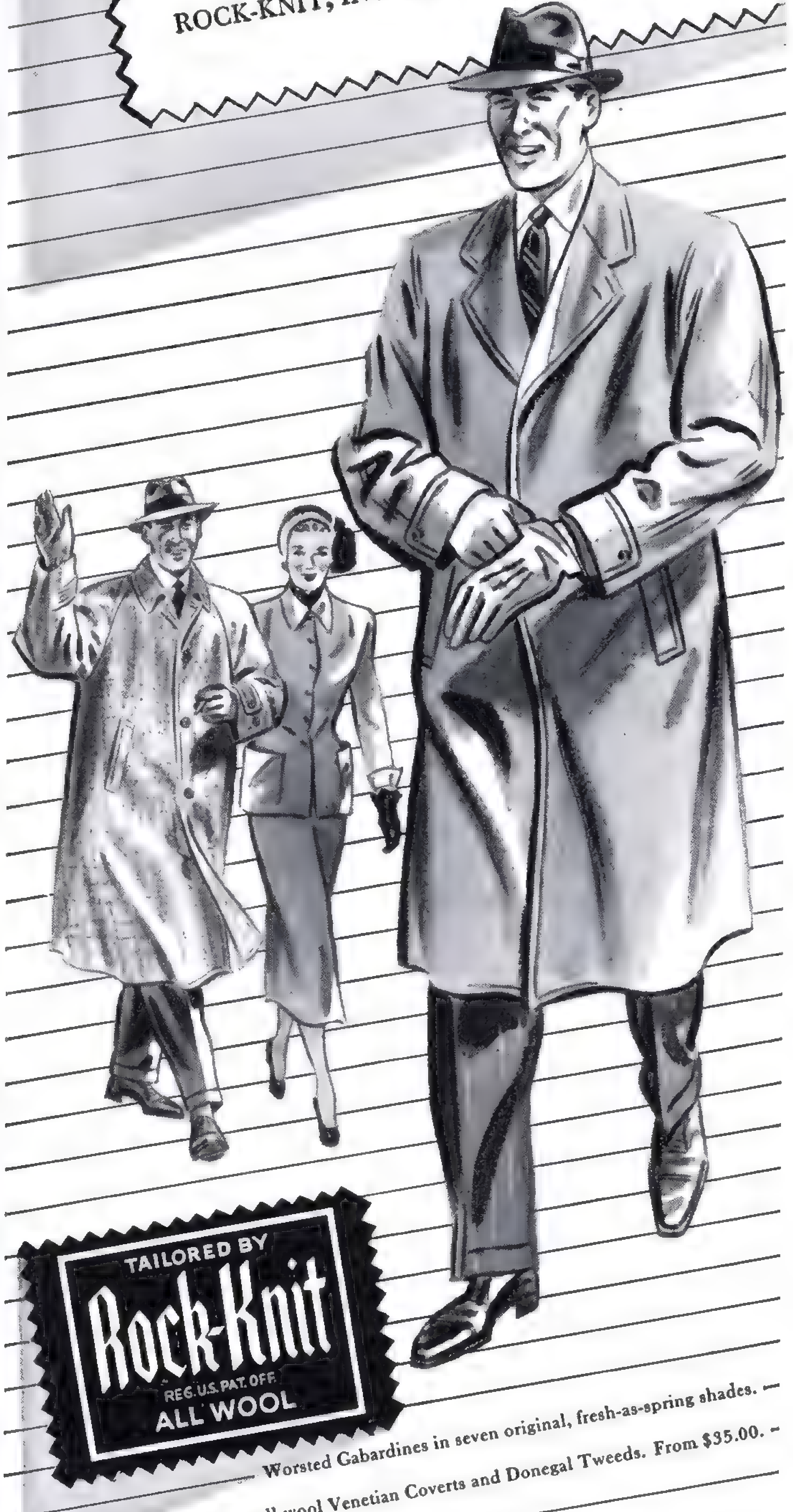

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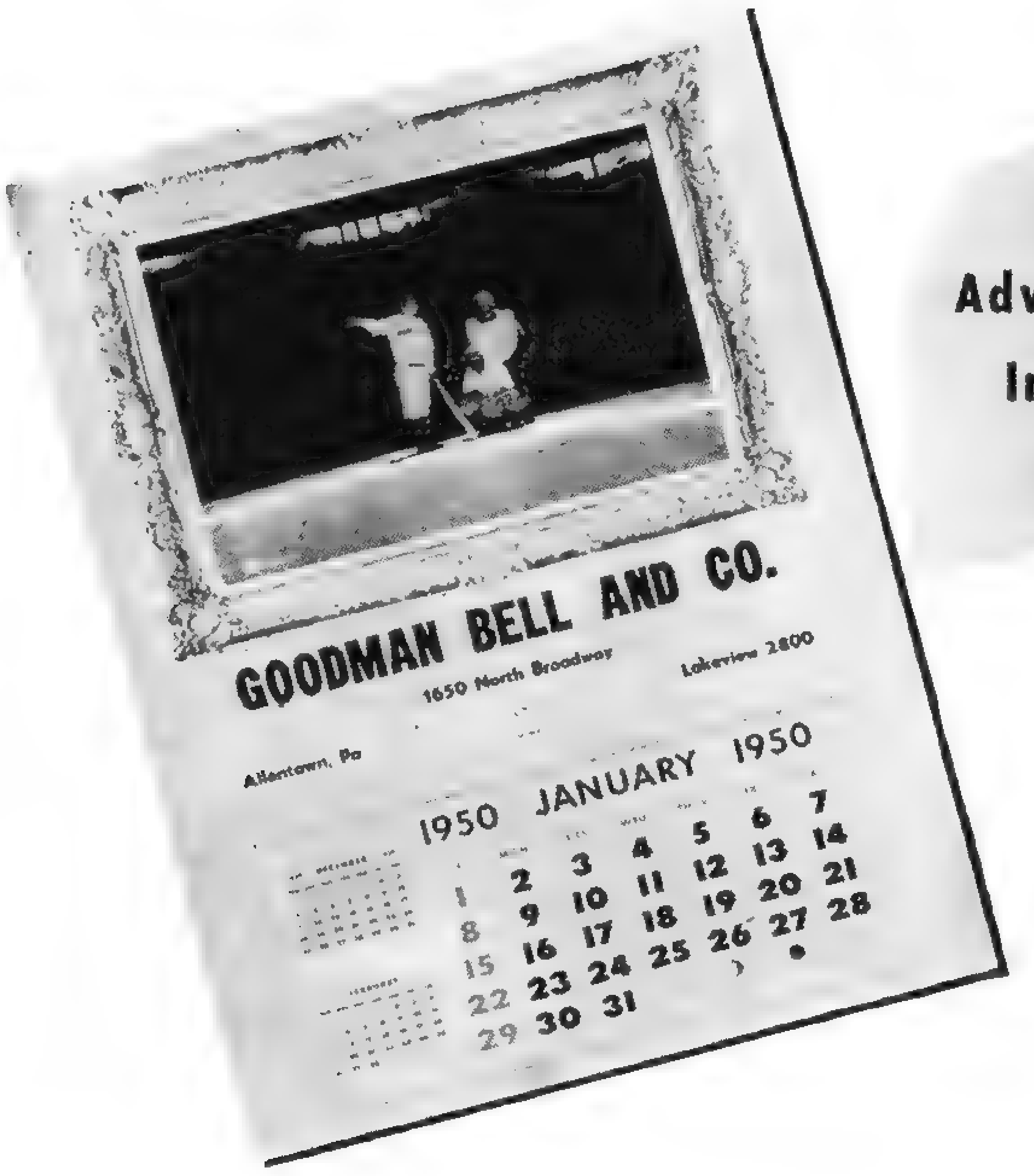

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said nothing. At night, I again slept alone before the fireplace, listening to the high and low notes of the rain driving against the windows and the roof. Intermittent nightmares divided my sleep, and, each time I awakened, I heard the rain and knew I had constant sentinels to guard the frenzied redhead who was my wife.

The dawn came up without thunder and without rain. When I carefully and quietly opened the bedroom door and found Lela fast asleep, I decided to go fishing and to prepare a good breakfast again—the kind we had had the first morning of our honeymoon.

I dragged the canoe over the slippery, wet pine needles, slid it into the water, and set out for the middle of the lake. When, thirty-five minutes later, I returned with my fish, I went directly to the kitchen. After leaving the fish on the sink, I decided to take another look into the bedroom.

I looked once, didn't believe what I saw, and looked hard again before I realized that Lela was gone.

As I quickly opened the front door, I saw her climbing into the canoe and pushing against the landing with the paddle. I ran, shouted, almost fell, and kept on running. Seeing me, Lela paddled furiously with slamming strokes.

I ran into the water and swam after the canoe. The water soaked into my clothes. My eye hurt, and my arms and legs felt leaden. I caught the back of the canoe and then swerved my head as Lela, whimpering and wild, tried to bash out my brains with the business end of the paddle. I caught the blow on my right shoulder. I took the pain, and in the same instant I twisted and upset the canoe.

Lela screamed. For a moment I saw nothing but the upset canoe and the floating paddle. Then, seeing Lela's face bob above the water, I swam toward her. As I reached her, she began to struggle with me, and I did what I had to do. I drove my fist into her jaw. I got her back to the landing and left her lying there, her face pale and unconscious.

I stripped off my wet clothes and swam out to retrieve the canoe and the paddle. Lela was conscious and shivering when I returned. I picked her up and carried her to the cabin, where I undressed her, dried her with a bath towel, and covered her with all the available blankets as she lay in bed twisting and moaning. At that point, I wished I had a bottle of whisky. I needed something good and warm, and Lela did, too. Instead, I went out to the kitchen and made some coffee.

A cup in each hand, I returned to the bedroom and handed her one. She took it, studying me as she did; and then, as her arm began to move, I swiftly turned my head away. The hot coffee scalded my neck, and the cup bounced and rolled to a wall.

I wanted to hit her. I wanted to hit her hard. But I didn't, because I thought she wanted me to. Instead, I retreated to the doorway, stood there for a moment, and then said, "Don't try to leave me, Lela. Don't try it again."

The sun came up and shone brightly and warmly. In the afternoon, Lela got out of bed. She opened her bedroom door quickly and stood there looking at me.

"I want to talk to you," she said.

"All right."

"Let's be sensible."

"Sure," I muttered, feeling the pain in my bad eye.

"This is torture—for me."

"I'm sorry if it is."

"Let's leave."

I said nothing.

Lela said, "There are no pianos here."

"Only a bank clerk."

Lela ignored the sarcasm. "Please," she said.

"I like it here," I said. "I think it's goddam beautiful. I spent the best day of my life here. A big part of me was born here."

My outburst of emotion was a dud. Lela only registered disappointment. "Aren't you going to get wise to yourself?"

"We're not leaving," I replied, softly but emphatically.

Lela stepped back and slammed the door behind her.

I left the cabin and let the wind cool my face as I walked toward the landing. As I looked across the lake and toward the darkening skies, I looked for the quiet hues and listened for the quiet sounds, for my mind remembered the slamming of doors, the screaming of a voice, and the agony of distended eyes.

I found the quiet, but the quiet was only a prelude to a crashing sound whose wild, tinkling notes made me think for a moment that the world was made of glass and tin.

The sound spun me about and I ran toward the cabin, hearing the distant echo of the crash and seeing a flicker and then a flash of flame in the bedroom.

Flames were escaping from a kerosene lamp, which lay dashed and broken in a corner. They licked at the pine wall; and there were more terrible flames, too, dancing in Lela's eyes.

I tried to rush to the fire on the wall, but Lela blocked the way. She screamed and clawed at me until, in one sudden fit of pain and anger, I threw her from me. She spun away and tumbled headlong toward the corner of the room where the fire was climbing as if the broken lamp were a genii bottle.

Lela's head struck the wall, and the flames struck out into her unruly red hair. I rushed to her and fell down beside her, rolling away from the fire and choking the flaming hair with my bare hands. My fingers blistered, but I could feel no pain. I could only hear the sounds of fire and screaming, and smell fire and burning hair, and see horror—ugly horror—in Lela's face and eyes.

The instant I had killed the fire in Lela's hair, I lifted her as if she were a rag doll and flung her out of the bedroom, into the big room. Then, as I began to feel the pain in my hands, I grabbed a blanket from the bed and wielded it like a long and heavy whip. I lashed away at the flames and the wall. At moments I seemed only to make more fire and more smoke, as though smoke caught fire and I was literally fighting fire with fire, smoke with smoke. I was still whipping and lashing and fighting long after the last flicker of fire had gone.

Then I stood still and tried not to breathe. I dropped the blanket to the floor and blinked my heavy and smarting eyes. Slowly, I moved one leaden foot after another, looking for Lela, but I couldn't find her. I took several steps toward the opened front door, and then I faltered and fell. Outside, there was the sound of a paddle violently slapping the water.

Face down on the floor I lay, coughing and tasting smoke and making fists with blistered fingers to fight pain. Blood trickled from the cut on my face, and it felt as though there were a billiard ball in my left eye socket.

I was alone in pain and defeat, and I didn't cry out for Lela, for I knew my voice would rise and drift away, unheard and unanswered.

I didn't move. I felt I was bound in a hell of my own making, lost on a battleground of my own choosing, beaten by a love of my own desire. I kept telling myself that I ought to laugh, but I couldn't. I could only damn myself. I tried to laugh at the bank clerk who had married a night-club singer who loved gin. I tried to laugh at the bank clerk who wanted to write songs. But I couldn't.

All I could do, lying there, was to say good-by to Lela Cade, good-by to Mrs. Earl Keane, who were one and the same. I wished her well. I hoped that all the water in the lake would turn to gin, just for her. I hoped that white swans were drawing her canoe all the way to the Great White Way, and I hoped she would find Slats Benstone at the end of the rainbow.

That's what had happened.

And, as I lay for five days in the Miami Beach hospital thinking about it, I felt that it had all happened to me as recently as the day before yesterday.

I knew Lela Cade still meant trouble; perhaps, though, she also meant love. This conjecture drove me on and I knew I would find the answers despite fires and fists.

Knowing I had to return to the Emerald Club and knowing there would be trouble, I set out at first, after being discharged from the hospital, to enlist the services of a private detective.

Jack Widney was his name. He had a strangely small face for a man who was built like a blocking back, and he didn't look very much like a prosperous private detective when I introduced myself to him in his dark and dingy office. But I could tell he knew his business from the way he listened to my story as I told it to him. I told him the truth and left it unvarnished.

"The guy who worked you over," Widney said, when I had finished. "His name's Vince Trapani."

I engraved the name in my mental notebook. Then I asked, "What else can you tell me?"

"Trapani's a professional tough guy. That's all."

"What about Slats Benstone?"

Widney grinned. "He looks underfed. But he isn't. He eats well. He's loaded. A big-time operator."

"What about his private life?"

Widney stalled. "I think you answered that."

"Is he married to Lela Cade?"

Widney shook his head. "Not that I heard of. I heard around that he had a wife. But she died some—hell, you told me she killed herself."

"I didn't," I said. "I told you she tried to kill herself. We stopped her."

Widney scratched his brown hair. "I seem to remember hearing something or reading something about . . ." He glanced at his wrist watch. "After you left town with Miss Cade, you didn't see any newspapers for a while, did you?"

I said, "No."

"Do you want to go to the Emerald Club right now? It's only ten minutes before noon."

"Why?"

"I was thinking we'd get intellectual. Like going to the public library. To read the files of the New York *Express*."

Jack Widney found the story he was looking for on page three of an old *Express*. He grinned with satisfaction, but I didn't, for, as I read the story, I wished Jack had never found it:

WOMAN, 35, PLUNGES
9 STORIES TO DEATH

Mrs. Walter S. Benstone, 35, wife of a prominent East Coast night-club operator, last night jumped or fell to her death from a ninth story window of her apartment in the exclusive Beekman Hill section.

Questioned at police headquarters, Benstone said his wife had been ill and despondent of late.

Earlier yesterday, he told police, Mrs. Benstone made an attempt on her own life by trying to slash her wrists with a scissors. An examination of the body disclosed a self-inflicted wound on the left wrist.

Jack asked, "What do you think now?"

I didn't answer him for a moment.

"Want me to guess for you?" he asked, hesitantly.

"I know what you're thinking," I replied. "I had the same idea."

"That Lela Cade was there when it happened?"

I nodded.

"Anything else?"

"I don't know," I muttered.

I couldn't say anything else. I could only remember the words spoken by Lela on the night she asked me to go away with her—the same night that Mrs. Benstone had killed herself. Or *was* killed!

A picture rushed to my mind of Slats Benstone pushing his wife out of an open window. I kept seeing other pictures too. But this one made sense. It made senseless things sensible and plausible, and gave reason to things that had once been devoid of reason.

From the library we drove to the Emerald Club. It was early afternoon, but I had an idea that perhaps Lela was rehearsing. It was a chance, and I was in the mood for chances, and not for waiting.

Widney reached into his pocket and gave me a ring of keys. "One of these ought to fit," he said.

"Fit what?"

"You didn't think you were going in the front door, did you? I was thinking you'd better go around the back—to one of the dressing rooms. To Lela Cade's dressing room."

"All right," I said.

"I'll be across the road. At the gas station. I'll kill time. Bust a

Continued on page 120

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window in the alley if you're in trouble. Then I'll butt in."

Jack kept his Ford flying down the highway at sixty miles an hour. He drove with two fingers of his left hand, and he used his right hand only to scratch his right ear. He was very cool, very confident. I was nervous, and I kept trying to dull my nerves with cigarettes.

Finally, Jack pulled into the gasoline station and hamburger stand across the highway from the Emerald Club, which, in the blaze of early afternoon, looked more like an imitation stone than the real thing.

When I started to get out of the auto, Jack stopped me. "Wait a second. Sit here a second. Do you see that side door? Near the back? Try that one. If anybody—any one of the employees—stops you, tell 'em you're from the health department—a food investigator. Good luck to you."

"Thanks," I said. Then I walked across the highway.

The side door was shut. I tried four keys before I found one that fitted and, when I slowly opened the door, I saw nothing and felt only the coolness of the interior of a pantry. I walked past shelves lined with cans and bottles and opened another door that led into a corridor; and then I found a door, an open door that revealed a garish dressing room.

There was one wide window in the room and the venetian blind was drawn. There were two other doors, both open. One led to a large clothes closet, half-filled with gaudy evening gowns, the other to a bathroom.

I went in and stood near the closet door, prepared to close it behind me the moment I heard a stir of life. I lit a cigarette, took one puff and then killed it. I scattered the smoke with my waving hand and put the dead cigarette in my pocket. There was a clatter of women's shoes across a wood floor. The footsteps came closer and closer. Quickly, I stepped into the closet and held the door slightly ajar.

Lela looked sad, beautiful, and sober. When she shut the door of the dressing room behind her, I came out of the closet.

"Earl!" she cried, her face distorted by fear and surprise.

"Hello, Lela," I said softly. I went to the door and turned the key in the lock.

"What are you doing that for?" she demanded.

"I don't want to be interrupted."

"What are you talking about?"

"About Slats Benstone's little tough guys. I had enough of hospitals."

Lela came toward me. She fingered the strip of adhesive tape over my left eye.

"Sixteen stitches," I told her.

"How?"

"A sawed-off guy gave it to me. In your room."

"*My* room?"

"At the Tropical Coast Hotel. In your bungalow."

"And what . . . ?"

"I was waiting there—for you."

"Why?"

"Because I didn't find any gin or whisky in the bungalow."

Lela shook her head slowly. "Trapani," she said reflectively.

I knew about Vince Trapani, but I didn't know about Lela Cade. I didn't know why I hadn't found any gin in her bungalow. "Why didn't I find any gin?" I demanded.

She seemed not to hear me. "What are you doing here?" she asked.

"Look, Lela, I didn't come to Miami Beach looking for you. I gave up looking for you the day you ran out on me—that day in the Adirondacks. But when I heard you singing here about a week ago, I had to find out something. I had to find . . ."

"You had to find out about my drinking," Lela said.

"You're sober now."

"Listen, Earl. Trapani's out front. Sitting at the bar. And Slats'll be here. In a few minutes."

"You think I ought to leave?"

Lela shook her head sadly. "Until I saw you a minute ago, I didn't know what had become of you. I didn't know you had been—that you saw me—that Trapani—oh, I didn't know anything. But now I know I don't want you to be hurt any more—not because of me."

"Forget that," I insisted. "Just answer my questions."

"I can't, Earl. I can't," Lela said.

"Maybe you can tell me why you were so anxious to go away with me that August night in New York—why you were so anxious to get married?"

"Please, Earl. Please."

I didn't relent. "Did you want to forget you saw Mrs. Benstone go out that window?"

Lela's eyes widened and I knew instantly she had been there.

I said, "It took me a long time to read the papers. But the papers didn't tell all. Maybe you will."

"Go away, Earl. Please go away. Forget . . ."

"I can't forget anything!"

"I've forgotten many things," Lela said, her voice husky.

"Did you forget you killed Mrs. Benstone?"

"I didn't, Earl. She fell."

"That's what Slats wants you to remember, isn't it? Didn't you fight with Mrs. Benstone? Didn't you push her?"

"No, Earl. No! I didn't." Lela began to weep. "I tried to stop Slats. But he went crazy. I never saw him like that before. His wife made him crazy. She wouldn't give him a divorce. She kept telling him how much she loved him, how much she needed him. Slats—he just threw her away from him. He pushed her away. And the window—the window was open. And she—and that's what happened. That's why I ran out of the apartment."

"And that's why you married me?" I asked.

"I had to get away. Far away."

"With anybody?"

"With anybody," Lela said, her voice almost inaudible.

"You never loved me?"

Lela didn't trust her voice. She merely shook her head.

"Damn it! Say it!"

Slowly, she turned toward me. "I never loved you. I—never—once—loved—you."

I heard the words and took them for truth. And why not? If Lela Cade had really loved me, she never would have left me—not for all the gin in the world.

"Good-by, Lela," I said. Suddenly, the past seemed dead, stinking dead, and I wanted to bury it and forget it forever.

When I opened the door, I saw that my retreat was cut off by a little man who answered to the name of Vince Trapani. He stood there, a sly grin on his face as he rubbed his right fist in the palm of his left hand. I had wanted to kill Vince Trapani, but now, as I confronted him, I had no feeling for revenge. I just didn't care. I only wanted to get far away from Miami Beach, and from Lela Cade.

"You talk loud," Trapani said, before I could take one step.

"I'm through talking," I said.

"You will be for a while—when I get through with you."

Lela rushed to the door. "Let him go," she said.

Trapani, his eyes still upon me, replied, "I get confused with a lot of orders. The boss told me what to do and I'm going to do it."

I tried to retreat to the window to signal Jack Widney. But as I took one step backward, Trapani took three steps forward. This time, though, I was prepared. I gave him blow for blow, and I beat him soundly. I could have beaten anyone on this day, because this was the day Lela Cade had told me she didn't love me—had told me she never loved me.

What did Lela do? Nothing. She stood there and watched us fight. She stood there and looked like a bored spectator watching two bums in the ring at Madison Square Garden.

I took one last look at Lela standing in the doorway, one last look at Trapani rolling around the floor with his kicked-in ribs. Then I wiped the blood from my mouth and walked out. Through the *front* door, this time.

Just as I stepped into the sunlight, I saw Slats Benstone leaving his sleek convertible. I gave him one hard look and continued to walk toward the highway and toward the place where Jack Widney stood by his parked Ford.

I got drunk that afternoon. I stayed in my room at the Sheridan Plaza Hotel and kept ordering Cuba Libres three at a time. Before night fell, I was lost to the world.

Then the world began to ring, and ring again. I fought to stay asleep, but the ringing finally won out. I answered the telephone.

"Keane? This is Jack Widney. Did I wake you?"

"What time's it?" My voice was thick.

"Two-thirty. I called you because I thought you'd like to know, Keane."

"Know what?"

"Get dressed."

"I'm already dressed. What's up?"

"I'll be right over." Jack hung up.

I poured ice water over my head and became sober enough to begin to shake as I wondered why Jack Widney had called me in the middle of the night.

I could think of nothing, nothing at all—except that I must have killed Vince Trapani. I was sure that Jack Widney was rushing over to tell me I had beaten Vince Trapani to death.

I was leaning out the window trying to fill my lungs with fresh air, when I heard a heavy rapping at my door. Quickly, I turned about, shook my head and went to open it.

I saw two faces instead of one, and it wasn't because I was drunk. I didn't see Jack Widney. I saw Lela Cade. And Slats Benstone.

Forcing a grin and mock hospitality, I said, "Come in. The party's just getting under way."

They walked past me and I shut the door, wondering how many million doors were yet to open before the face of Lela Cade would fade forever from reality and imagination.

"Anybody want a drink?" I asked. Lela sat down and stared idly at the floor. Slats leaned against a dresser, lighted a cigarette, and carefully studied me. "How about a straight gin, Lela?"

Lela looked up slowly. She said nothing, but her eyes told me she didn't appreciate the jest.

I turned to Slats. "What do you want?"

"You got to be a big success," he said without envy. "We saw your show, Lela and I. We liked it. We liked the music. Damned original."

"So what?" I demanded.

"So I hoped you would continue to be a big success. In your own way—without getting in ours."

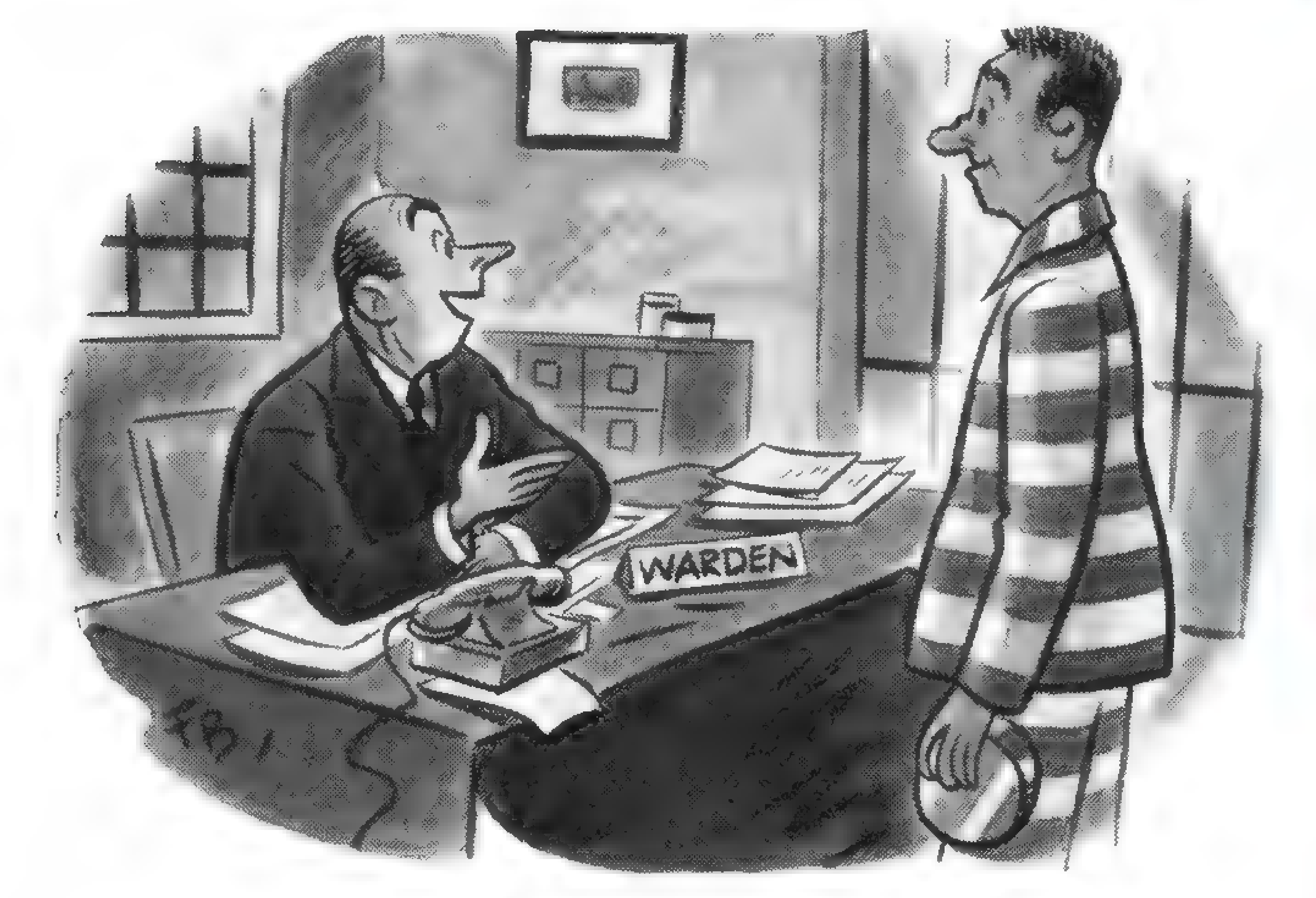
"Lela was my wife," I said.

"Maybe she still is," he replied.

I winced and turned to Lela.

"Maybe I am," Lela agreed.

Continued on page 122



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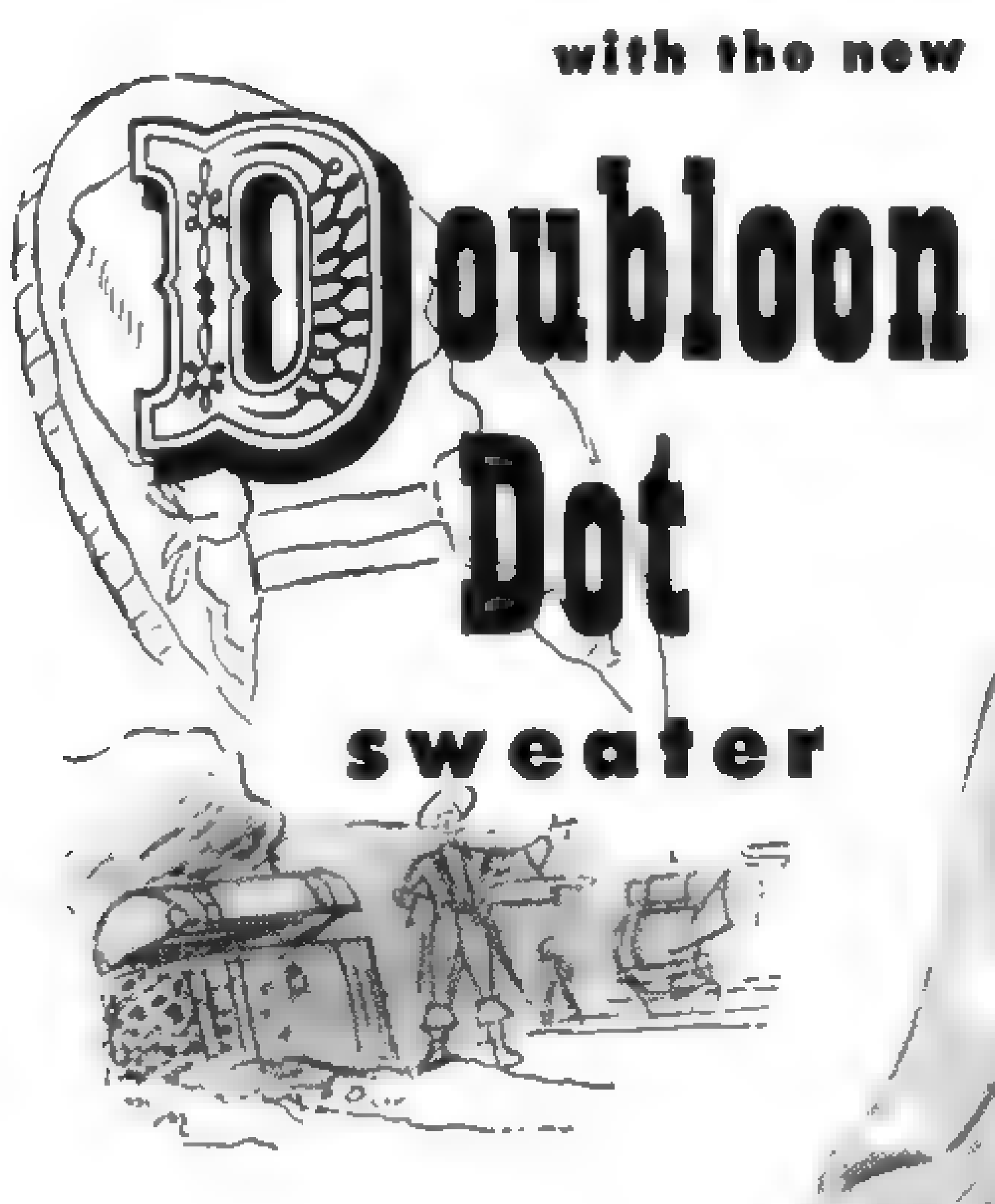

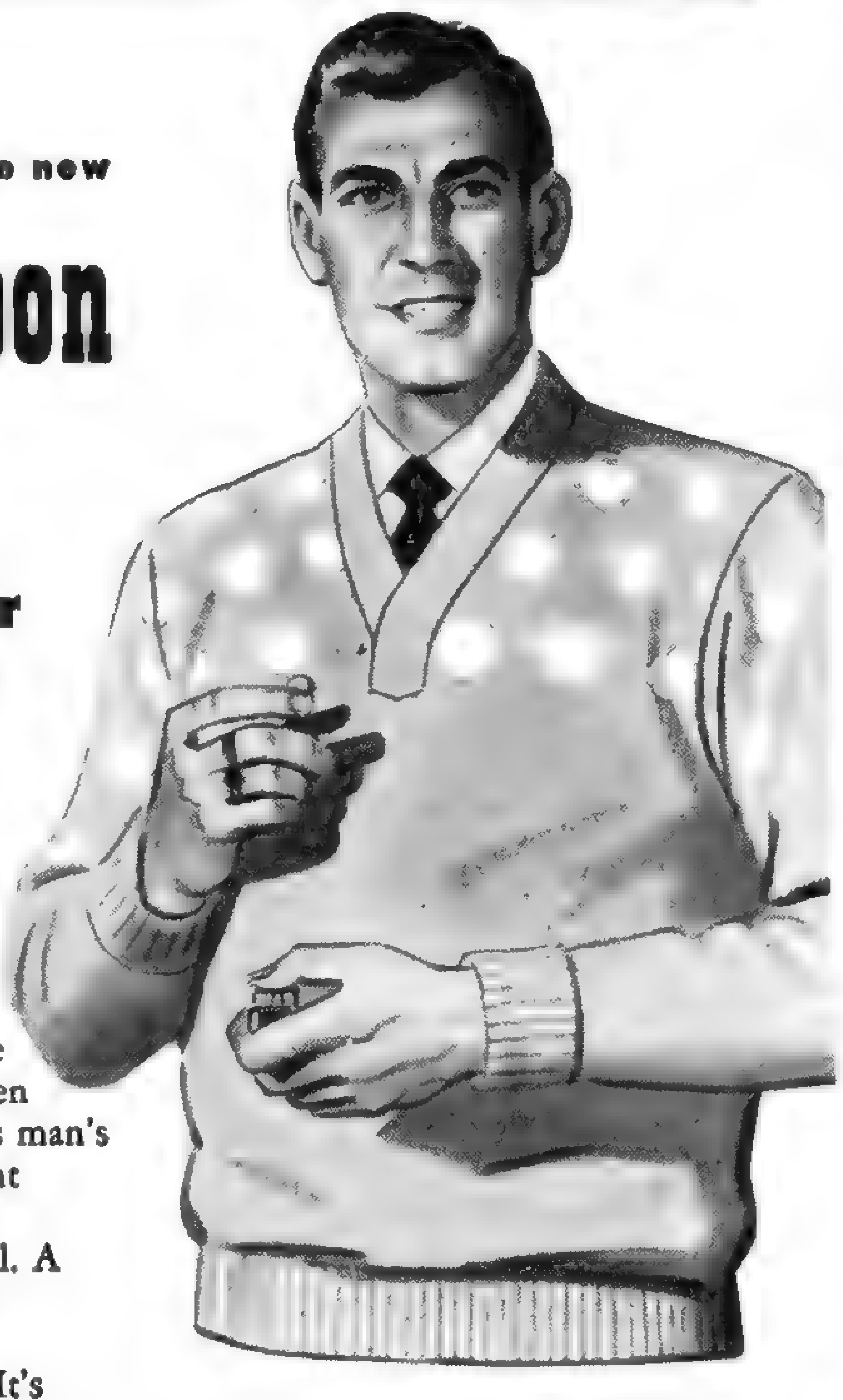

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"No divorce?" I asked.

Slats said, "I waited too long. That's always my trouble. Waiting too long. Being too cautious and . . ."

"You weren't cautious about having Trapani work me over," I said.

"You're wrong. That was part of caution. Believe it or not. And I had another boxing lesson lined up for you."

"I'm sorry I missed it," I retorted.

"I'm sorry you did too. Another boxing lesson wouldn't have been too bad. But seeing Lela—and talking to Lela—was worse."

"She didn't tell me a thing!"

"Of course she did," Slats insisted. Turning to Lela, he said, "Didn't you, dear?"

Lela nodded without looking up. She was crying, softly.

Slats said, "I don't like jails. That's the big reason I didn't marry Lela. Some cops have long memories. Sometimes, after a long time, they put two and two together. I didn't want to give them that chance."

"So you waited. Now what do you want?" I asked.

"I want to know how easily you forget," Slats said deliberately.

"I never forget. First I get black and blue on the outside. Then black and blue on the inside—and I stay that way."

"Lela said you'd go away," Slats said. "She said you wouldn't make any trouble."

"I make trouble all right. I make it when it's requested."

Slats reached into a coat pocket and withdrew a small automatic. "And I'm ready to oblige."

Lela got out of her chair. "Slats!" she cried. "For God's sake!"

Slats looked coldly at her. "It's time you quit running out on me, Lela. You ran out once. I wouldn't want to see it happen again." To me, he said, "Get your coat."

I didn't move. If Slats had decided to kill me, he certainly wouldn't do it in my hotel room. I knew he didn't like jails and gallows. "It's comfortable here," I said.

Lela moved suddenly. She tried to wrest the gun from Slats. But he stepped aside and pushed her to the floor. His eyes were wild—and upon Lela and Lela alone. I knew what he was thinking, and I lunged forward and hit him just as the gun went off. Lela screamed and rolled over, as Slats and I grappled on the floor.

He still had possession of the gun and was trying to point the muzzle toward me. I fought. I fought hard, but I was weak with too much rum. Slowly, I felt my strength ebb.

Then I heard an explosion. I heard it and waited to fall down to hell. But I didn't fall. It was Slats who fell. His gun dropped to the floor.

A moment later, I saw Jack Widney pick up the small automatic with his left hand. In his right hand he held a big Luger.

Slats was dead. He *looked* dead. But Lela wasn't dead. I could see that and Jack could see it. Slats' bullet had struck her beneath the right shoulder blade. Jack telephoned for help and then turned to me. "Trapani's been killed. That's why I came over."

"You mean, I did it?" I asked weakly, remembering how violent I had been with Trapani.

"He had four bullets in his body," Widney said.

"Bullets!" My voice hit a high note and my spirits climbed up to it. "I thought I *kicked* him to death."

"Benstone?" Widney guessed.

"Maybe," I agreed. "Maybe. Maybe because he found out I got to Lela. Maybe because Trapani let me get away."

I went to Lela then, held her head in my trembling hands, and waited for the men in white.

Before I entered the small white room where Lela was confined, I spoke to the doctor who attended her. He was a big man with cynical lines on his ruddy countenance.

"How is she?" I asked, as Widney stood beside me.

"She'll live. The bullet penetrated her left collarbone. Lucky woman," he said, as he walked away to talk to a group of newspapermen and detectives.

A few minutes later, I convinced the nurse that I was Lela's husband, and I promised her I would stay only a few short minutes and wouldn't make Lela talk too much.

Widney waited in the hallway. But the nurse entered the room with me. She pushed a chair close to the bed, and I sat down.

I muttered, "Hello."

Lela smiled weakly. "I'm sorry, Earl—for the way things . . ."

"It's all right," I assured her.

"Slats—he had me frightened—terribly frightened. That's why I could never leave him. Even after I had—even after I had stopped drinking. I knew he'd never let me leave. I tried once. I couldn't try again."

I nodded and smiled to let her know I understood.

Then Lela said, "Slats killed Trapani. This afternoon—just after you left." Tears filled her eyes. "Slats found Trapani trying to hit me—to hit me because I stepped on his hand—when he went for his gun—to shoot you."

"I thought I had him cold," I said.

Lela shook her head. "You didn't. Then Slats came in. He lost his temper—the way he lost his temper when he pushed his wife out the window."

The nurse stepped close to us. "Please, you mustn't talk too much."

Lela ignored her. "You asked me a question before, Earl."

"Don't say anything," I pleaded.

But she ignored *me*, too. "I stopped drinking—about nine months ago—Earl. I started to see your image. Instead of all those other images. And I didn't—I didn't want to blot it out. I didn't . . ."

The nurse took my arm and led me toward the door.

"I'll be back," I said, before the nurse shut the door.

In the corridor, Jack said, "How about a cup of coffee?"

I grinned. "Sure. My treat."

"Everything okay?"

"I think it's going to be," I said.

It was late in May before Lela and I returned to that cabin on Lake Seven. We took a plentiful supply of groceries and a lone bottle of champagne. We had our second honeymoon, and I can tell you that it was better than our first. Lela agrees. ⧺

Continued from page 71

Yours for the Basking

Continued from page 55

in winter, averages 76 degrees, the beach umbrellas may be described as gay—as they always *are* described—the sand is as white as you dreamed it would be, and the whole is garnished with palm trees.

So soporific is the effect of Nassau beaches on the average visitor that they have a magnificently constructed local girl working for the beach clubs. What we mean is, this girl has chiseled features all over. Whenever a man has been lying on the sand too long, they send the gal out in a Riviera-style diaper bathing suit. If the guy doesn't lift his head, he's dead.

The hotels in Nassau, to turn to more mundane considerations, are excellent in each price range. Most lavish is the British Colonial, which is really a self-contained resort, with private beach, swimming pool, and tennis courts. Rates, with meals, run from $20 to $24 daily, single; and from $32 to $45, double.

Two miles out of town and overlooking beautiful Montagu Bay is the very lovely Fort Montagu Beach Hotel, with its own beach. Rates are from $20 to $36 per day, single; and $32 to $44, double, including three meals.

One of this department's favorite hotels is the shaded and quiet Royal Victoria, just a block away from Bay Street, Nassau's famous shopping street. It's an old place with the kind of age that's an asset. Dancing in the Royal Victoria's garden is something you'll always remember. It has a circular glass floor with an island of palms in the center. In the moonlight, it seems as though you are dancing on the water of a South Seas lagoon. The hotel's rates, without meals, are from $11 to $12 per day, single: and from $10 to $18 per day, double.

Nassau is an hour away from Miami by Pan American Clipper, with a 30-day round-trip excursion fare of $30, plus tax.

If you prefer your basking to be landlocked, though, we can go overboard on our next recommendation for the month—Arizona. Its climate—particularly in the Valley of the Sun desert country centered around Phoenix and the famous resort area surrounding Tucson—is made to order for midwinter refugees from the banging radiator pipes of the frozen northland. It's bright, sunny, hot, and dry during the day, with the average noon temperature in March about 70 degrees, and the humidity about 30 per cent.

They tell a story about a travel writer who came to Arizona once, after he had exhausted his stock of such adjectives as *colorful, exotic, bizarre, beautiful, lovely, sensational, breath-taking, magnificent,* etc., on lesser places. He crossed the state line, they say, took one look, and fainted dead away.

Which is just about the impact you'd expect from a state which includes within its borders such tourist spectaculars as the Grand Canyon, Painted Desert, Petrified Forest, Hoover Dam and Lake Mead (on the Nevada line), Meteor Crater, extinct volcanoes, Indian reservations, trading posts, cliff dwellings, and the fabulous Arizona Biltmore Hotel, where the rates begin at $30 per day.

Arizona, to be epigrammatic, is the Old West—with private swimming pool. You can drive along for hundreds of miles and see nothing but Indians on the road. The Apache squaw who laughs and jokes with you over the sale of a basket she wove might very well be the daughter of a tough ex-marauder and cavalry-chaser. And the Hollywood cutie in jodhpurs at the dude ranch is quite likely to be out after the scalp of the guy who drove past the gate in the Cadillac convertible.

There's nothing phony, though, in the Wild West atmosphere. This desert country was settled and subdued within the memory of the old-timers you'll see leaning against the false-fronted saloons. Arizona didn't become a state until 1912. Many ranches are owned by the families that carved them out of the frontier.

Down in Tombstone—"The Town Too Tough To Die," they call it—men in long, black coats, Stetson hats, walrus mustaches, and flowing sideburns still re-enact, once in awhile, the famous Earp-Clanton gun fight in which eight or ten guys shot it out with six-shooters in the dust of the main drag.

If you're one of those chirpy characters who like to cavort around cemeteries, you'll have a wonderful time in Tombstone's Boothill graveyard, reading such epitaphs as—and we quote—"John Blair—Died of Smallpox. Cowboy Throwed Rope Over Feet and dragged him to his Grave," and, over one mass grave, "Dan Dowd, Red Sample, Tex Howard, Bill DeLaney, Dan Kelly—Legally Hanged, Mar. 8th 1884."

All of which is not to indicate that you'll have to pack a roscoe in your two-suiter. The U. S. Cavalry is said to have things out there pretty much under control—all except the hordes of carpetbaggers who descend on the state every winter.

Much of the credit for Arizona's popularity as a resort—recently, at any rate—is due to Trans World Airline's "Quickie Vacation" program to take northerners down there for winter week ends. American Airlines, too, has been beating the drums for Arizona vacations. That's admirable—for poor souls who can't take off for more than a week end. As for us, we'd find it practically impossible to pull away that quickly from a place so ideal for the man who wants to bake away under dry, high-octane sunshine the effects of a winter up north.

(For information on some of the Arizona hotels and ranches, turn to the Going Places Depart-

Continued on page 124

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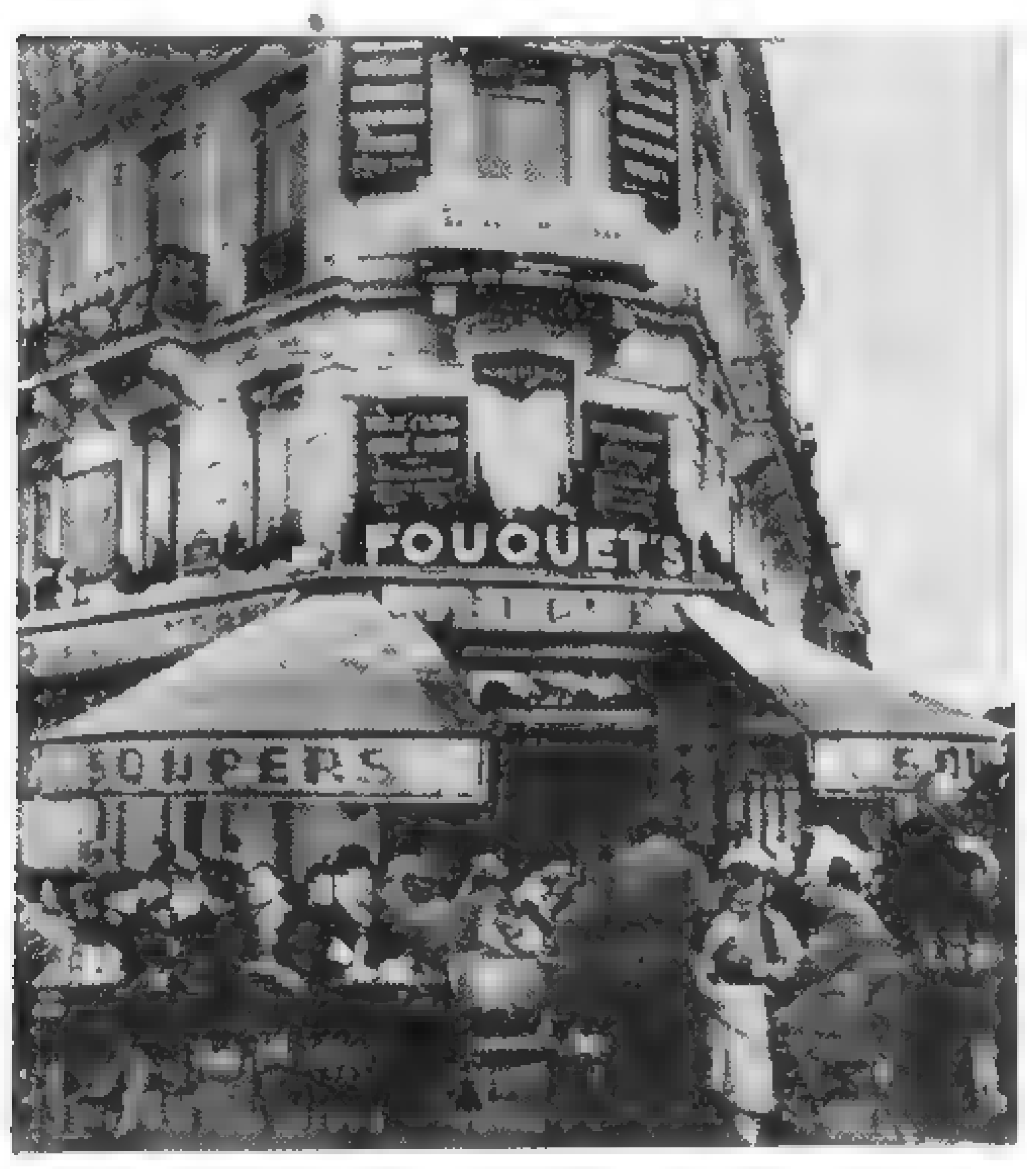

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"TRAVEL BUILDS TRADE AND AIDS PEACE"

Yours for the Basking

Continued from page 123

ment in this month's Esquire.)

Turning again to the sea for our third basker's paradise of the month, we—as the travelogues say—come upon happy Bermuda, peaceful in the sun.

Bermuda would be even happier and more peaceful if visitors would stop arriving on the scene primed for the tropics. Bermuda is about 600 miles off our Atlantic coast. In latitude it's just about parallel with Savannah, Georgia. It isn't southernness that warms Bermuda up; it's the Gulf Stream.

If you'll just keep that in mind, you won't have any disappointments over Bermuda weather. In March you'll probably be able to swim about half the days you're down there, and the rest of the while you'll have a wonderful time cycling, playing golf and tennis, fishing, sailing, sight-seeing by horse and buggy, and just plain and fancy loafing in the sun.

Bermuda is the perfect place for a man who wants to recover from the ravages of a slam-bang winter by taking things easy. Very carefully have the Bermudians avoided setting up the type of resort that would appeal to those who insist on night life and the razzmatazz sort of vacation.

Bermuda's great attraction—for this department, at least—is the fact that it's another world a little over three hours away from New York, and less than four from Baltimore and Washington, by air. It's a world of pink coral beaches, wonderful pastel houses literally carved out of surrounding soil, and narrow, winding, tree-shaded roads that lead you to remote parts of the island where you can swim all day—raw, if that's the way you like it—without fear of intrusion. It's a world that smells of cedar trees and lily fields, and the salty spray of surf pounding against the rocks. It's a world of slow boats chugging around the islands—a sunny, drowsy and restful world. Its atmosphere is very pukka sahib, with British colonials going around in long shorts—very tea-at-the-Yacht-Clubbish, very tweedy. Nowhere else can you get so far away so quickly. And that's why—for the late-winter escapist—there is no place quite like it. ⧺

Continued from page 55

Esquire's Where and When Calendar

The first in a series of monthly roundups of timely vacation travel

For Snow—Go West

(Altitude gives most western ski centers fine snow conditions for spring skiing all through March and into April.)

CALIFORNIA—Three main ski areas: northern, central, and southern. In northern part of state, outstanding resorts include Mt. Shasta Area (some all-year-round skiing), Mineral Winter Sports Area, Tahoe National Forest Area. Yosemite is one of central California's top ski resorts, also Tuolumne County in Stanislaus National Forest and Inyo National Forest Areas. Southern California has Mt. Waterman—45 miles from L.A.—Mt. San Antonio, Camp Seeley, Lake Arrowhead, Snow Valley, and Big Bear Lake regions.

OREGON—Mt. Hood is the state's leading ski ground, with Timberline Lodge one of country's best-known resorts. Also excellent are Government Camp, Tilly Jane Ski Bowl, Odell Lake, Hoodoo Ski Bowl, Tollgate Bowl, and Crater Lake National Park.

WASHINGTON—Mt. Baker National Forest, with alpine open-country skiing through April. Paradise Valley in Rainier National Park, American Ridge Ski Bowl, Leavenworth Area, Milwaukee Ski Bowl, Mt. Adams, Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Spokane State Park, Snoqualmie Ski Bowl, Stampede Pass, and Stevens Pass Winter Sports Area are other top Washington spots.

NEVADA—Mt. Rose, in Mono National Forest is the best.

IDAHO—Sun Valley, of course, with Learn-to-Ski Weeks outstanding all-expense bargains at $75.

MONTANA—Best-known ski areas are the Beef Trail region of Deerlodge National Forest, and Birch Creek and Elkhorn Springs in Beaverhead National Forest.

WYOMING—Jackson Hole Area is one of the best-developed ski resorts in the Rockies. Other excellent ski centers: Medicine Bow National Forest, Casper Mountain Area, Teton Pass, and Big Horn Mountains and National Forest.

UTAH—Alta region is one of the best in the West. Snow Basin outstanding; also good skiing at Summit Valley and Brighton.

COLORADO—Heart of the Rockies; spring skiing is some of the finest in entire country. Aspen, Berthoud Pass, Estes Park, Glenwood Springs, Pike's Peak, and Steamboat Springs—all skiers' meccas.

NEW MEXICO—Fine spring skiing at Sandia Mountain, Agua Piedra, and Hyde Park Areas.

ARIZONA—For late-season skiers, Arizona's Snow Bowl is hard to beat. Snow lasts through June.

CANADIAN ROCKIES—Magnificent skiing resorts near Banff include Mt. Norquay, Mt. Assiniboine,

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Sunshine Valley, and Skoki Valley. Jasper National Park features Maligne Lake Area, Trapper Valley, Tonquin Valley, Whistlers Mountain, Columbia Icefield (for year-round skiing), Mt. Edith Cavell, and Big and Little Shovel Pass. Revelstoke is British Columbia's best-known ski center, together with Grouse Mountain on the Coast and Forbidden Plateau on Vancouver Island.

For Snow—Go East

(Eastern ski centers are near great population centers, but spring ski conditions are not as dependable as in the higher Rockies. Check snow conditions with railroads before taking off in middle and late March.)

PENNSYLVANIA—150 miles of varied terrain for novice and intermediate skier in the Poconos.

NEW YORK—More than 500 miles of ski trails running from Buffalo to New York City. Western ski centers include Allegany State Park and Ellicottville. Outstanding resorts in the state's snow belt are Old Forge, Speculator, North Creek, and Snow Ridge at Turin. Adirondack region includes greatest number of touring and cross-country trails in northeastern U.S. Lake Placid and North Creek tops here. In the Catskills are Pine Hill, Phoenicia, and Bear Mountain—only 42 miles from New York City.

MASSACHUSETTS—Berkshire Hills are long-time favorites with metropolitan skiers. In northern section, Mt. Greylock, Bernard's Hill, Sheep Hill, and Farnam's. Around Pittsfield are Bosquet's and Pittsfield State Forest. In southern Berkshires it's Great Barrington, Lenox and Beartown State Forest.

VERMONT—State has scores of truly excellent ski areas. Best-known include Stowe, St. Albans, Barre, Woodstock, Pico Peak, Manchester, and Brattleboro.

NEW HAMPSHIRE—Here too are more snow spots than you can shake a ski pole at. State's really fine ski developments grouped into ten general areas: Eastern Slopes, Northern Slopes, Franconia Notch, Plymouth, Hanover-Lebanon, Tamworth, Belknap Mountain, Newfound Lake, Monadnock and Uncanoonuc Mountains. Favorites with spring skiers are North Conway, Cannon Mountain, Pinkham Notch, Tuckerman Ravine, and Mt. Washington.

MAINE—Best skiing is at Bridgton, Fryeburg, Bangor, Camden, Andover, Bethel, Rumford, Skowhegan, and Waterville.

EASTERN CANADA—Famed Maple Leaf Trail, key Laurentian ski artery, runs 80 miles from Shawbridge, 40 miles north of Montreal, right up to Mont Tremblant, past villages of Piedmont, Mont Rolland, Ste. Marguerite, Val Morin, Val David, Ste. Agathe des Monts, and St. Jovite—all ski centers. Ten miles north of Quebec is the superb Lac Beauport development, including Mt. St. Castin and Mont Tourbillon.

Sun and Fun

MIAMI AND MIAMI BEACH—Winter vacation capital of the nation, and jammed to the city line during the peak of the season, which lasts until March 31. Then northbound exodus begins and rates come down, but weather stays perfect.

PALM BEACH AND WEST PALM BEACH—Close together geographically, but that's all. Palm Beach, one of country's most fashionable resorts; West Palm Beach, across Lake Worth, more for the masses. Same sunshine, but half the price.

ST. PETERSBURG—Leading resort of the Florida west coast—right behind Miami area as a late-winter and early-spring mecca for displaced Yankees.

PALM SPRINGS—One of the top sun spots of the west, a green oasis on the western edge of California desert, 103 miles from L. A.

LOS ANGELES AREA—Movieland, featuring such place-names as Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Santa Monica, Malibu Beach, Culver City. Warm enough for swimming on sunny days—cool at night.

SAN DIEGO—Southwesternmost tip of U. S., it's an ace for the man who likes to mix salt spray and sunshine; fishing and loafing.

MEXICO—Offering late winter and early spring sun-seekers just about everything from the hell-raising of such border towns as Tijuana, Mexicali, Nogales, Ciudad Juarez, Nuevo Laredo, and Matamoros to the peaceful simplicity of sun-drenched spas like San José Purua, Garci Crespo, Fortin de las Flores (where you swim in a pool full of gardenias) and Ixtapan de la Sal. Acapulco, a perennial seaside favorite with visiting Yanquis. (See article in August, 1948, Esquire.) And, of course, Mexico City—one of the best places in North America for a late-winter vacation.

For the Man with a Long Stride

ST. MORITZ—European ski center for the upper-crust of the international set. Good late-winter skiing all through the surrounding Swiss Alps.

CHAMONIX—French version of St. Moritz. Skiing is fine and scenery sensational.

MONTE CARLO—In the little principality of Monaco, flanked on three sides by the French Riviera and on the fourth by the blue Mediterranean. The swank hotels, fabulous Casino, smart shops await you—not too expensively, either, since the French franc rate is so favorable.

FRENCH RIVIERA—Nice, Cannes, Menton, St. Tropez, Antibes—all the mouth-watering names of this most glamorous of all resort areas are there in the sun for the man who is really footloose—a night and day away by plane. And, if you get tired of sunshine and flowers, there's skiing in the southernmost French Alps only fifty miles from Nice.

ITALIAN RIVIERA—Things are just about back at their prewar level—for the tourist with dollars. Food, service and accommodations are excellent and comparatively cheap because of the exchange rate. ⧺

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I Dub You Sir Knight

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club downtown—in one of the few buildings higher than four stories in the whole metropolis—and dutifully called on the President, who wore golden epaulets and a ton of gold braid. He interviewed the Director of Public Relations, so-called, talked to the owner of the radio station, and held an informal press conference with local journalists. Then Mr. Parquet drove him back to the embassy, and he rested until dinner.

Mrs. Parquet was waiting in the drawing room, and he noticed something he had not seen in the morning—that she had a long bandage underneath a stocking.

"I had the most ridiculous accident last week. But I might well have been killed. I was walking with Scandal, our new terrier. The leash dropped out of my hand, and there he was, about to be run over by a trolley full of soldiers. I don't quite understand how I did it, but I threw myself at him, to save him, and almost got run over myself. Jerry was frightfully annoyed. I shook all day when I got home, and took a lot of brandy and stuff."

Everybody had too many cocktails, because the Foreign Minister was almost an hour late. The other guests were about what one would expect—the local oilman, whom the ambassador obviously loathed; the worn-out wispy British consul general; the representative of the public-health service whose fingernails were packed with dirt; a bemedaled general; two of Parquet's young secretaries; and all their wives. Carterin talked pleasantly with a dozen people to whom he was carefully introduced, whose names he would never remember, and whom, thank God, he would never see again.

By the time the soup was served, Carterin had intercepted at least one strained and angry look between the ambassador and his wife. His curiosity mounted. He knew the emotion between these two was not one that would be easy, or pleasant, to describe. Once, when a servant fumbled with the roast, he caught Mr. Parquet darting a look at Mrs. Parquet that was full of the purest hate, while at the same time his face shone with proprietariness, possessiveness. The oilman, who was handsome, flirted with her; the ambassador looked away frigidly. Even to a person with much less acumen than Mr. Carterin it would have been obvious that between Mr. and Mrs. Parquet there was a wide chasm, but which was nevertheless sometimes bridged.

The snarl that comes in the middle of a marriage—how well Carterin himself knew it! But he and Nina were, thank heaven, long past it. His own marriage, after the most turbulent of storms—in the calmest home waters now! That dreadful shoal of lost desire—behind them, forgotten!

The dinner broke up into twos and threes sitting in corners, or crossing and recrossing the ornate drawing room fluidly, and Mr. Carterin found himself with Mrs. Parquet in a glassbound alcove, just off the main room but facing it. They could see everybody, but were not easily observed.

"We will sit here just a moment. Then I shall have to be a proper hostess."

Mr. Carterin intently watched her face, which, despite its drowning loveliness, now held the deadness of a face not loved. And suddenly he saw her as she would be ten years hence. A shadow was forming implacably under those marvelous eyes; he saw as if it were already there the drastic imprint of crow's-feet now invisible, but lurking beneath the delicate mauve skin, lying in wait for her, already formed within the flesh, hungrily biding their time before springing out. This made Mr. Carterin feel sorry for her, tender, and admiring.

He hummed to himself a few lines. It wasn't a song, but always he liked to hum these words as if they had an inner music of their own:

But beauty passes, beauty vanishes
However rare, rare it be . . .

"What on earth are you murmuring to yourself?" she asked.

"Some lines about how foolish it is to be sad."

"I'm afraid I don't understand. But then I've never been good about understanding things."

He didn't want to become too personal. The ambassador in crossing the drawing room had glanced at them pointedly once or twice. "I remember something a friend said to me. You kill what you don't understand."

"How so? Please explain."

"It doesn't really matter."

"You are a philosopher. How does a person become wise?"

He hesitated, smiling. "All I know is that wisdom doesn't come too easily. It has to be the result of struggle."

"Why do people marry, Mr. Carterin?"

"Because they don't find someone else."

Starved, starved, unbearably lovely, the beauty burning but without fuel—so ran Mr. Carterin's tentative thought. What did she share with her husband? Joy? No. Sorrow, which can be much more binding? No. What did they know of closeness? Close as a sheet to a blanket, he murmured to himself; close as a peach stone to a peach . . .

"You are the oddest man! You are murmuring to yourself again." She looked at him with the frankest curiosity. "I like the way your eyes watch me. I wish you were a sculptor. I would like your hands to carve my face."

Mr. Carterin retreated a little. He thought sharply of Nina waiting for him in Buenos Aires—Nina, so dowdy, so comfortable and erratic—and how he would be seeing her, after six long weeks

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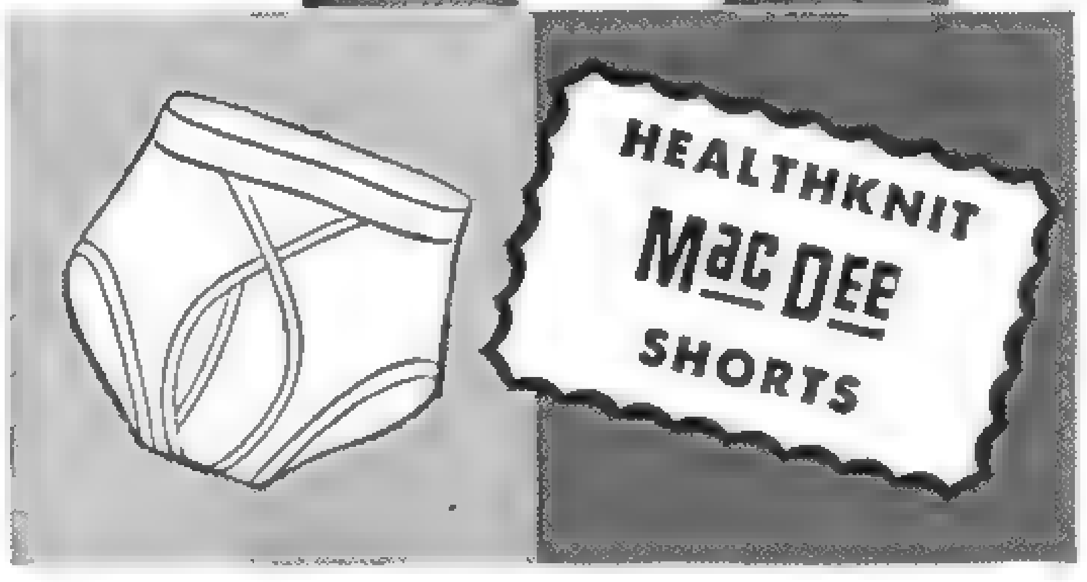

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"How anybody can have the effrontery to worry about one's private life any more!" Mr. Carterin said. "With the kind of world we live in, with what's going on in the world!"

"Yes?"

"Think of all the energy lost—in the ceaseless battle between ego and counterego."

"But think of everybody's unhappiness too. If all our lives weren't so miserable, the world might be a better place."

"True, true. Perhaps I put the cart before the dinosaur?"

"What? You have a very lively imagination, Mr. Carterin."

Abruptly, the Foreign Minister came up to Mrs. Parquet, kissed her hand, and prepared to take leave. Carterin drifted out into the big room, drank a mild Scotch, and chatted with the oilman. One of the young secretaries bustled around with nightcaps, and the assembled wives rose from the couches where they had been sitting. The party was breaking up. The ambassador addressed Mr. Carterin when the guests were gone.

"Well! This is about the best we can provide. I trust you have enjoyed yourself, however."

"Yes, but it's been an evening when I feel my age."

"Ah. The altitude."

A violent emotion seized Mr. Carterin as he walked slowly upstairs. All his life, underneath the greyish, soft exterior, he had burned for experiment, for involvement, for experience. But consider the waste, the frustration! The focus of his attention shifted from Mrs. Parquet, and again a vivid, intense image of Nina rose out of a mist of memory: Nina a quarter of a century ago—no, very nearly thirty years ago. Nina in a sweater on a hilltop, waiting for him that time in the light, silvery spring rain; Nina kissing him, and the lovely eagerness and youth not merely of her lips, but in every unspoiled gesture—he even remembered the way her vigorous knee had flexed backward as he caught her in his arms. And what had Nina said? "I dub you Sir Knight!"

Usually, Mr. Carterin fell asleep at once, with the compact direct interest in sound slumber that the self-sufficient have. But tonight, as he slipped his clothes off, his heart was beating violently. He was literally gasping. Obviously he was too old, too plump, for living on such a high plateau. He threw himself on the bed, aching for calm breath. He turned the light out and tried by will power to make his heart beat more slowly. He tossed a little, dozed, and woke with a start. If ever a sound should exist of such slightness, such impalpability, as scarcely to deserve the name of sound, this was it. The brush of a feather across a forehead; a maple leaf falling on brown grass: less than these. Yet the sound was real. More than this, it had been unmistakable. Only one thing in the world could make this particular slight sound, and Mr. Carterin knew it well—the fingernail of a woman tapped with infinite stealth against a door.

Quietly, he rose and pushed the door open. Then he saw, retreating down the long corridor, but now poised as if caught in flight, a filmy figure, a blur of rose, about to open another door, her own.

Without putting on slippers or bathrobe, Mr. Carterin followed her down the corridor. Her door opened and he was inside.

"I thought I heard a noise. I crept down the hall to find out what it was."

She was lying, of course, though conceivably she might have heard him toss! He did not mention the fingernail tapping along his door.

She closed her eyes with a shiver, pulling herself into bed. Mr. Carterin did not know quite what to do. Then in the simplest manner he hoisted himself on the bed and sat on crossed legs at its very bottom, smiling. They were in the same bed, but four or five feet apart, and he made no movement to come closer.

"Aren't you being rather rash?" he asked mildly. Her husband's bedroom must be on this floor somewhere; for all he knew, it might be the room adjoining. Mr. Carterin reflected rapidly on what had seemed the ambassador's preoccupation with the time of his departure. Had interludes like this taken place before?

Yet he did not want to leave Mrs. Parquet. The ridiculousness of his position, in the event they should be interrupted, was a matter of indifference. He had too much ego to care about his pride.

"This isn't what you'd call an ideal time or place for a simple chat," he continued.

"You have to go tomorrow."

"I know."

"I enjoyed your talk. I wanted to see you again before you left."

"It seems a pity that I have to go," Mr. Carterin said.

"Ah, darling," she said.

He did not wish to interrupt the mood they had achieved by the slightest movement. One false step, no matter how slight, and this gentle balance would be broken. Then he discovered that he was chilly. She had slipped on a bedjacket, set with tiny white bows in the shape of fleur-de-lis; but he was in pajamas only. His feet were cold. He pulled the blanket over them. The obvious thing would be to get in bed beside her. She wanted it and perhaps he did too. He was astonished to find himself the victim of so romantic an urge. It was dangerous—but let that ride. But he did not want to be too precipitous. She would not rebuff him, but her victory should not be too easily won. He waited, and now his feet were like chunks of ice.

"You look uncomfortable."

"It's only that my feet are cold."

"Come close to me."

"Of course. If you wish."

But he realized then that, though he desired her, he did not desire

Continued on page 128

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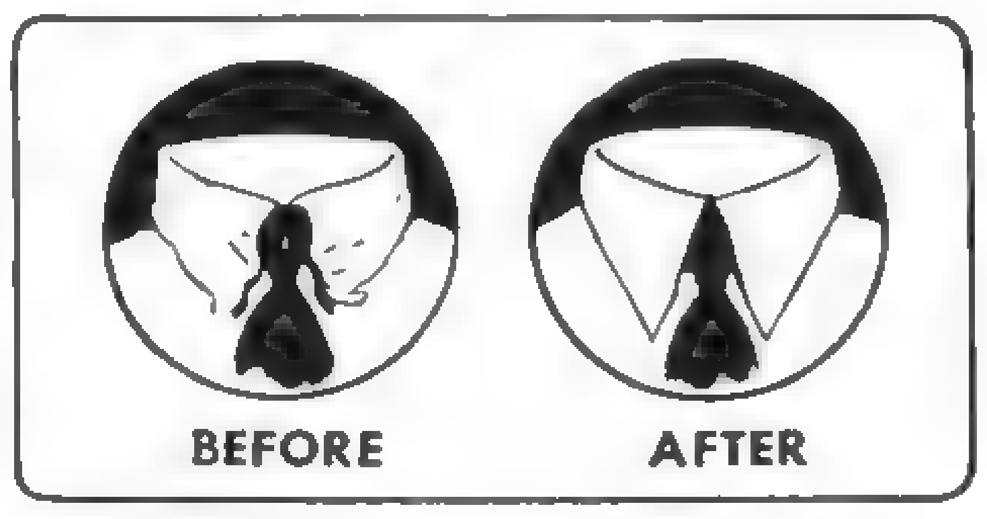

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I Dub You Sir Knight

Continued from page 127

her very much. They were very close and compassionate and she did not seem to mind it that he demanded little of her. What she wanted was understanding and appreciation and affection. Mr. Carterin provided these, and after a while they started to talk and he asked her gently, "Tell me about your husband."

"What is there to tell? I admire him. He is rich, disappointed, and a machine."

She was telling him then almost the whole story of her life, and in two moments two hours passed. She was vivacious, dramatic, and confidential. Then she yawned and murmured, "Goodness, it's four o'clock in the morning! Run off to your room." He kissed her, said good night, and tiptoed toward the hall. He noticed then that her door, which had not been in his range of vision from the bed, was slightly ajar, and must have been so all the time. She had not even whispered to him, "Close the door." Women, women, he reflected. When there was real emotion, there was no thought of risk.

He slept soundly till eight, dressed rapidly, and came down to breakfast. The ambassador was flapping through the morning papers vigorously. Mr. Carterin wondered if Mrs. Parquet would be there. The breakfast table was set for three. They finished their coffee by the time she joined them. She was dressed as if for the day, and Carterin noticed something odd. Her manner with the ambassador was much more relaxed, and he, too, seemed friendlier and more relaxed with her.

"Well, darling, what are your plans for today? I can get away from the office by three, I think. We might ride. Haven't had the horses out for an age."

"That would be very nice, Jerry."

"I'm afraid you'll have to be getting on, Carterin. We should be at the airport in an hour."

"It won't take me more than five minutes to pack," Mr. Carterin said, rising.

"I hope you've enjoyed your visit, Mr. Carterin," said Mrs. Parquet. "Jerry, darling, we might ride all the way to the old picnic place and have the station wagon meet us to take us home."

"Very good."

"Don't bother to see me off," Mr. Carterin said.

"My dear fellow, it will be a pleasure."

Mrs. Parquet begged to be excused, and the ambassador gave her a friendly pat on the arm. His stiff smile went soft, and then he smiled at Mr. Carterin too. Men, men, Mr. Carterin murmured to himself. They were like women, children. The possessiveness of the human male! The ambassador had noticed how warmly he admired his wife, and this had impressed him and so he was now admiring her too, and this would restore at least temporarily the faulty equilibrium between them. Or was it more complex?

Mr. Carterin said good-by to Mrs. Parquet, and a moment later they found themselves in the upper corridor together. With the most graceful but fleeting of gestures, she laughed and kissed him on the cheek. Mr. Carterin went into his room, puffing hard, and tossed his things into a bag. The ambassador was waiting for him under the porte-cochere, and they rode in amiable silence to the airport, where the jeeps were already chasing the llamas off the far end of the immeasurably long runway necessary to a heavy airplane in that altitude.

"Good-by, Mr. Carterin. I'm glad you consider your mission satisfactorily accomplished."

"Thank you. It has been a very pleasant mission."

"You have perhaps learned something of our problems here."

"Indeed. Good-by."

Mr. Carterin settled himself in his seat, waved through the small beige curtains to the ambassador who was standing there punctiliously, with the appearance of a razor about to be folded into its sheath, and closed his eyes. The plane's motors grumbled into a roar. They bumped a good deal circling between the mountains, and Carterin became more acutely aware of himself and dissatisfied with himself than he had been for some little time. All that he was—all that he no longer was! He was angry and bitter at himself for desiring Mrs. Parquet now with a passion much more intense than he had felt the night before. Also the thought occurred to him that it was ridiculous for any man, like Mr. Parquet, to be so dependent on a woman.

By the time the plane landed at Buenos Aires late in the afternoon, Mr. Carterin had overcome most of his bad temper, and he looked forward to seeing Nina with comfortable pleasure and anticipation. But she was not there at the airport. He went through the Argentine customs—the most difficult in the world next to the American and the Russian—and his sudden anxiety became alarm. He waited near the bus for a moment, and then rushed back to the customs shed, thinking that he might have missed her. He explored every corner, searched vainly on the apron of the airport, and bounced out to the ramp again, where his eyes turned desperately down the darkening streets. He decided to telephone the hotel. He could not find a booth. Wildly, he ran up and down the platform. Then a taxi came up fast, and Nina stepped out—weathered, grey, and looking her fifty well-lived years.

"God damn it!" Mr. Carterin exploded, in a voice bursting with love, irritation, and the sense that he had been rescued from immeasurable catastrophes. "Can't you ever learn to be on time?" ⧺

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Man on the Ball

Continued from page 57

thought his table tennis was pretty hot. He wanted to play Miles. He was willing to make a small wager that he could beat Miles.

"You wouldn't have a chance," said Miles. "I could even beat you sitting down."

The tennis star, insulted, doubled his bet. Somebody produced a high stool of the kitchen type and Miles perched on it, two or three feet back from his end of the table. The lawn-tennis man was not bad; he simply had no conception of the intricate technique involved in top-flight table tennis. He played as if it were merely lawn tennis that had been left in vinegar overnight and had shrunk in size. Miles took him handily in three straight games.

Championship table tennis doesn't look awfully tough to a spectator. You notice Miles and his colleagues don't pay much attention to their serves. The fraternity-house champion is likely to have a powerhouse serve, a low sizzler with a nasty twist of some kind; the U.S. men's singles champion, on the other hand, merely puts the ball in play with a low-bouncing but unaggressive shot. This is because, since 1933, the rules have outlawed such devilish inventions as the finger-spin serve, which in experts' hands had become almost unreturnable; the chances are that the fraternity-house champion, without knowing it, violates the rules of the game. The ball must be held on the flat palm, fingers outstretched, thumb free; struck onto the server's side of the net, over the net, and onto the receiver's court. These restrictions keep top-flight players from cutting or hitting hard enough to force their opponents into error; and so, by convention, the serve has practically vanished as an offensive weapon.

You notice, secondly, that while the table-tennis experts play farther back from the table than you probably do, they're not as far back as posed publicity pictures would have you believe. They *can* go way back, it's true. On occasion, Miles will bound backward as much as forty feet and still manage to make the return. He would greatly prefer not to do so, however, because it means he has been forced back. A table-tennis ball, which weighs less than one-eighth of an ounce, slows down suddenly when the force of a drive is spent. An agile expert, therefore, can beat a hasty retreat and get shots which, as they careened off the table, were going too fast to see, much less return. But it's a last, desperate resort.

What you can't observe—and the part of championship table tennis that the lawn-tennis star is likely to underestimate—is the importance of spins, cuts, and chop shots. You have to play Miles to understand their full significance.

You face the champion across nine feet of green table. He looks quite friendly. He explains his repertory of strokes, showing you, for example, a thing he calls the forehand chop, which looks a lot like the action involved in hammering a nail. Then: "All right," he says. "Now when I chop the ball at you, it has a tendency to come off your racquet into the net. Let's try a few."

It sounds fine, and you entertain the secret idea that perhaps you'll be able to pull off one of your supersmashes and make a monkey out of the champ. Miles floats the ball over the net right to your forehead. You knock it back to Miles. You notice, vaguely, that on the third shot Miles has employed that hammer-and-nail business, but the ball comes toward you nice and easy and tempting. You swing gracefully.

Now you begin to see what Miles has been talking about. You hit the ball all right, but it dribbles off your racquet and poofs into the net. On the next try you aim higher; the ball goes right for the net. You play ten points and, feeling like a fool, you net every one of Miles' chop shots.

"It's the backspin," Miles says soothingly. "You want to watch it." But you can't even see it. Then Miles proceeds to show you how he can make you hit out or off to the left or off to the right. He tells you in advance which blunder you are going to commit. Like a dumb sheep, you make the mistake just as predicted.

"Of course, if I mix them up without telling you," Miles says, "it starts to get kind of complicated." He hits one to you. It looks like a chop, and you aim for the ceiling to make sure you'll clear the net. It wasn't a chop. You hit the ceiling.

"I see what you mean," you say, and resolve to keep the whole thing strictly on a conversational plane from now on.

Whatever loss of self-esteem you may have suffered, you have gained some insight into the skill that has enabled Dick Miles, at twenty-two, to overshadow the U.S. table-tennis scene. Miles is the first four-time winner of the national title in the game's history. He has won four times in a row and will undoubtedly be a prohibitive favorite to make it five this year. He is a three-time winner of the Eastern Championships. He has won the New York City title four successive times. He is, with Miss Thelma Thall of Columbus, Ohio, the present world's mixed-doubles champion. For the past two years he has been number-one man on the U.S. Swaythling Cup Squad, table tennis' equivalent of the Davis Cup team, and he is also number one on the New York City team, perennial winner of the national intercity championships. Readers of the magazine *Table Tennis Topics*, official publication of the United States Table Tennis Association, recently voted by a wide margin that Miles was the

Continued on page 130

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Man on the Ball

Continued from page 129

"greatest player the United States has ever produced."

Miles doesn't look much like an all-time champion. He is small (5'7"), light (122 lbs.), and rather pale. He has curly black hair, dark brown eyes, and an ingratiating, wistful smile. His hands are small and sensitive. His right forearm is conspicuously muscular; otherwise his sports career, as far as one can see, has done nothing for his physique. Nevertheless, there is a self-conscious assurance about the way he moves. It is clear that Miles, despite his quiet and his reserve, regards the world with something of the disdain he holds for a high-bouncing return by a clumsy opponent.

Miles affects an easygoing mien, but in reality he is about as composed as a race horse waiting in the starting gate. He stands at the table with a slight slouch, relaxed and looking somewhat abstracted, but his high nervous-energy potential is revealed in the hair-trigger speed of his reactions and, at tight moments, by a quick gesture of impatience. He holds his hands parallel in front of his chest and shakes them ever so slightly, as if to say, *sotto voce*, "For God's sake, Miles, let's not slop around."

The champion loves table tennis and loves to win. At the same time, though, he thinks there is a definite limit to legitimate enthusiasm over any sport. He is aware that the world is full of a number of other things; and two of the other things that interest him most, just now, are Beethoven chamber music and James Joyce. He says he'd rather play the piano than table tennis, and has arranged to swap lessons with a young concert pianist, Bernard Baslow, who feels exactly the other way around. Miles' room in his family's apartment on New York's Riverside Drive is crowded in about equal measure with table-tennis trophies and albums of classical records. Several years ago, a sports writer on the New York *Post* told Miles that he ought to read Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and Miles followed the advice. "I have never been the same since," he says. He is now in the middle of *Finnegan's Wake*. As far as Miles knows, he is the first table-tennis champion with any interest at all in Irish literature.

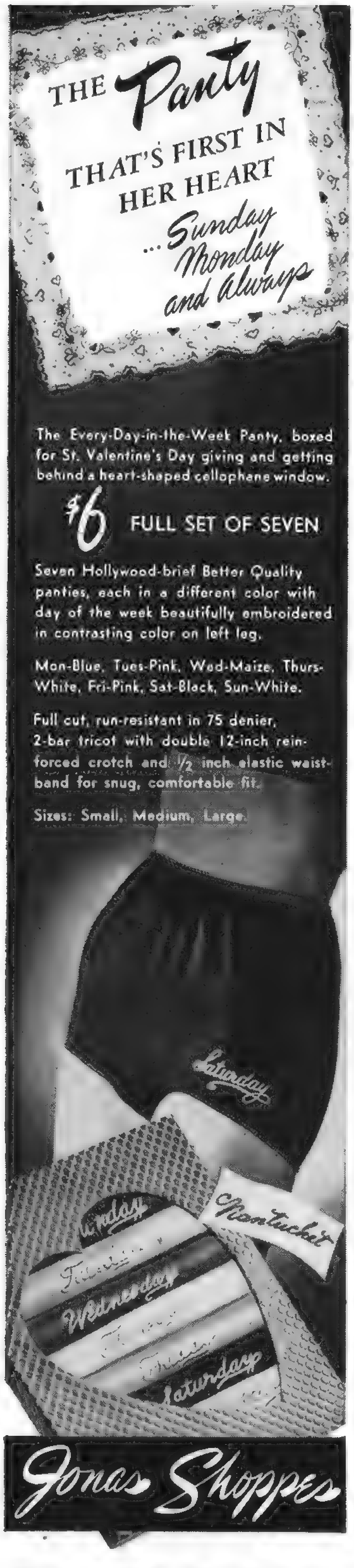
The champion first began to play in 1938. He was thirteen, a high-school freshman. He started playing simply because there was a table-tennis emporium at 79th Street and Broadway, right on his way home from school.

Once he tried it, he liked it, though. And after a couple of years, he was good enough to beat most of the 79th Street set. Then somebody persuaded him to try his luck at the curious establishment known as "1721 Broadway," which is the focal point for table tennis in the metropolitan area. By a process of mutual self-help, the 1721 Broadway regulars have long enjoyed the same kind of quasi monopoly in table tennis that Southern California has in lawn tennis. At the moment, for example, the five leading players in the country are all 1721 Broadway boys, which makes it pretty hard to get up a really first-class match in any other city. Twice a week, Tuesday and Friday nights, there are tournaments—a handicap affair Tuesday and a straight elimination contest Friday—which anybody can enter for a fee of one dollar. Miles began to play in these events and for a year or so he got trounced on a twice-a-week schedule, but by the best players in the U. S. Lou Pagliaro was then champion, and "Paggy" helped Miles more than anybody else. "Paggy" needed a practice partner, and fifteen-year-old Miles was overwhelmed with delight at being allowed to knock himself out as Pagliaro's foil.

In October, 1941, Miles entered the Brooklyn Championships, his first major competition. Before anybody quite realized what was happening, Miles had beaten Sol Schiff and Tibor Hazi, who ranked sixth and fourth nationally, and had pushed national doubles champion Ed Pinner to extra games in the semifinals. The table-tennis world buzzed with excitement. The New York *Sun* said Miles was "the gold nugget" of the tournament. Everybody was astonished except Pagliaro, who knew his protégé had developed fast—and Miles, who couldn't see how he had let Pinner beat him.

Then in 1945 Miles got really hot. He won most of the important tournaments that come ahead of the Nationals, which are held annually in a different city around April first. He was favored to take the U. S. championship, and he justified the pretournament odds by winning in a breeze. There were those, however, who belittled Miles' victory in '45 on the ground that many of the country's best players had been in the armed forces and had not yet had time to bring their drives and chops up to prewar standard. Miles had been kept out of the Army because of a heart murmur.

One reason for such anti-Miles propaganda was the champion's habit of making his victories look deceptively easy. Previous title-holders had been far more colorful—Schiff with his all-out concentration on the offense; Pagliaro, "The Terrible Midget," who raced around like a demon possessed and could return anything anybody hit at him. Miles, by contrast, seemed to take it easy, favoring neither the defense nor the offense, and often winning without apparent effort. From the gallery's viewpoint, the closest thing to a Miles specialty was his forehand drive in which he whipped his racquet around in a complete circle and banged the ball



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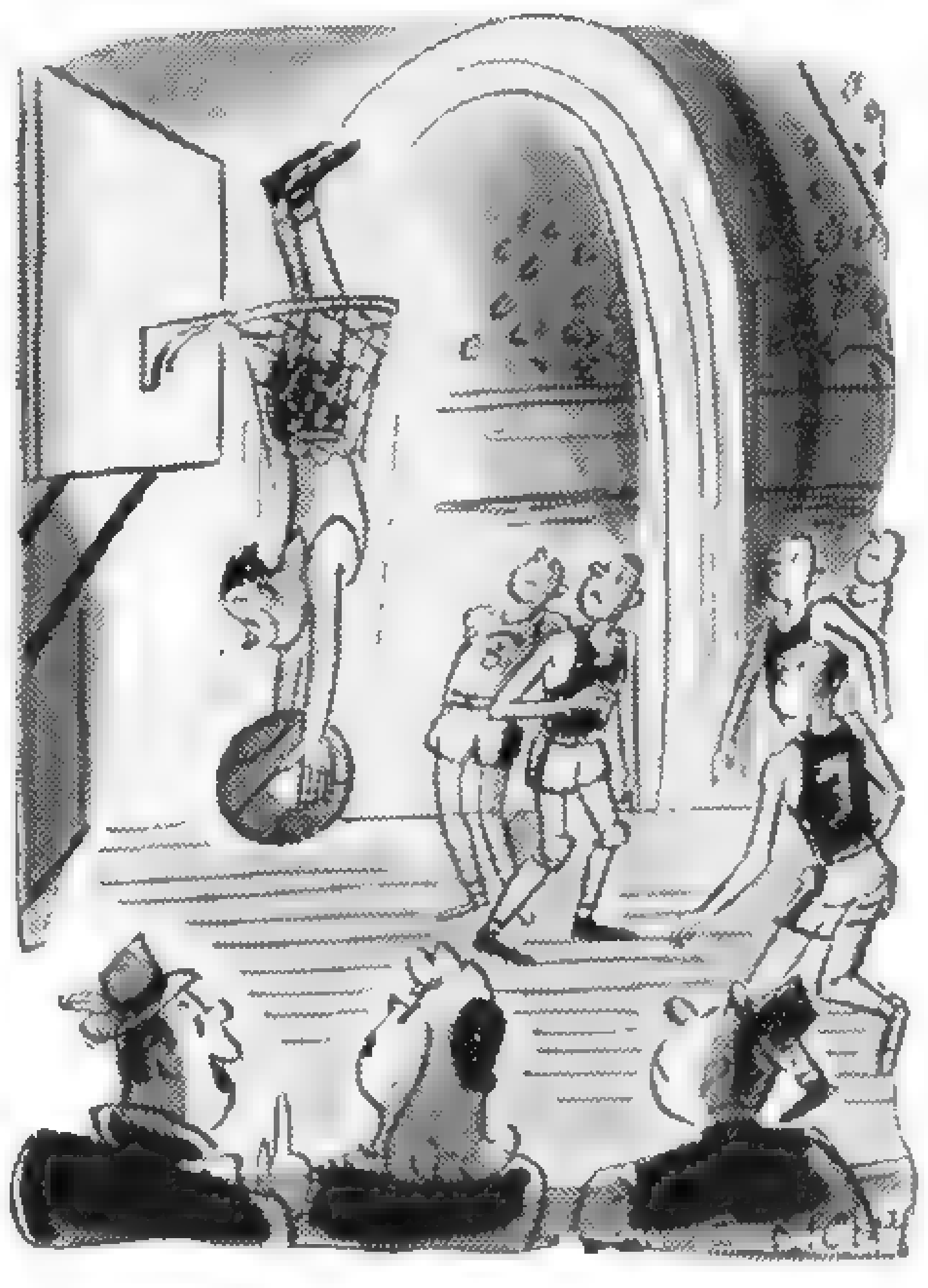
away with dazzling speed—a shot Miles liked to use to finish off a game, a signature to remind opponents that struggle was hopeless. Actually, Miles' secret weapon was a well-rounded game combined with unbelievably sharp anticipation. He had no real weakness for an opponent to attack. He gave the impression of casualness because he was a split second ahead of his rivals. He seldom had to scramble after a shot because, more often than not, he was in position waiting for it.

The '46 championships showed the skeptics. The field of 149 players included every past U. S. titleholder. All had had plenty of time to get ready. Miles waltzed through the tournament almost effortlessly. He lost only one game en route, and he smothered Schiff in the finals 21-10, 21-10, 21-10. Quite a few of those who had questioned the champ's ability now began to grumble that Miles was *too* good and that he was hurting organized table tennis by taking all the element of doubt out of tournament play. Miles won for the third time in '47, tying the record that Pagliaro had set in '40, '41, and '42.



"Beautiful shot"

It was probably lucky for Miles that he went abroad in '47 to represent the United States in the world championships in Paris and got himself soundly beaten. It proved that he was human, thus scotching in advance any suggestion that Miles ought to be made to play left-handed or blindfolded in order to restore an element of competition to the game. In preparation for the international play Miles picked a gangling seventeen-year-old, Martin Reisman, as a practice partner. Miles has done for Reisman what Pagliaro did for Miles, and while Miles finds a certain amount of ironic pleasure in the parallel, he wishes that his protégé had not learned his lessons quite so well; Reisman in the past two years has become Miles' most serious rival in the U. S. and the chief threat to the security of the champion's crown.

So far, both Reisman and Miles have failed to bring home either the Swaythling Cup for team play or the singles championship. But Miles and Thelma Thall won the mixed doubles championship last year—the second time the United States has ever captured a world title. The USTTA has high hopes for this year, when, barring some startling upset, Miles and Reisman will represent us again, in Sweden. It's not impossible—if we're lucky on the draw—that there will be an all-American finals.

One threat to the realization of that rosy dream is the danger that Miles and Reisman, in the meantime, will wear each other down to a frazzle. As soon as they got home from London in 1948, they played in the U. S. nationals and, true to form, met in the finals. It was, perhaps, the best match in U. S. table-tennis history. Miles and Reisman stood even at two games apiece. In the fifth and deciding game they tied at 20-20. The points seemed interminable. One lasted eight minutes, long enough for many an entire game. Miles finally beat his former pupil, thus retaining his title and setting the new all-time record of four successive victories. But when it was done, Miles was too exhausted to speak. Reisman could have been scraped off the floor with a table-tennis paddle.

Miles wonders how long he will be able to keep Reisman under control. He speculates eagerly about becoming the first American to win the world championship. But there is a third question that intrigues him too: is it possible to earn a living at the game?

The words "professional" and "amateur" are not mentioned in table-tennis circles. There are no such things. There are only "registered" players—players of some repute and skill who are in good standing with the USTTA—and so there is no table-tennis equivalent for the larger game's opprobrious "tennis bum."

Table-tennis experts are entirely free to make as much money as they choose out of the game; the trick is in figuring out a way to do so. The only man who has solved the puzzle with real success is Coleman Clark, an exhibition player, who appears regularly in theatres, night clubs, and at sports shows. Clark has found it hard work. Miles is both impressed and depressed by the fact that Clark, in a ten-year period, has worn out an estimated total of 24,500 table-tennis balls.

Despite all discouragement, Miles hopes soon to make a tidy sum out of a coast-to-coast tour, under USTTA auspices, with England's Richard Bergman, the current world champ, as his opponent. Their matches will be real contests, free from trick stuff—a miniature version, in fact, of the recent Riggs-Kramer rivalry. Miles has very little intention of letting Bergman run away with the series.

"Naturally I figure as the underdog," says Miles. "After all, Bergman is the titleholder. On the other hand, the last time we played I beat him 21-16, 21-14. It's just possible I can teach him a thing or two. I mean, of course, about James Joyce!" ♯

Continued from page 57

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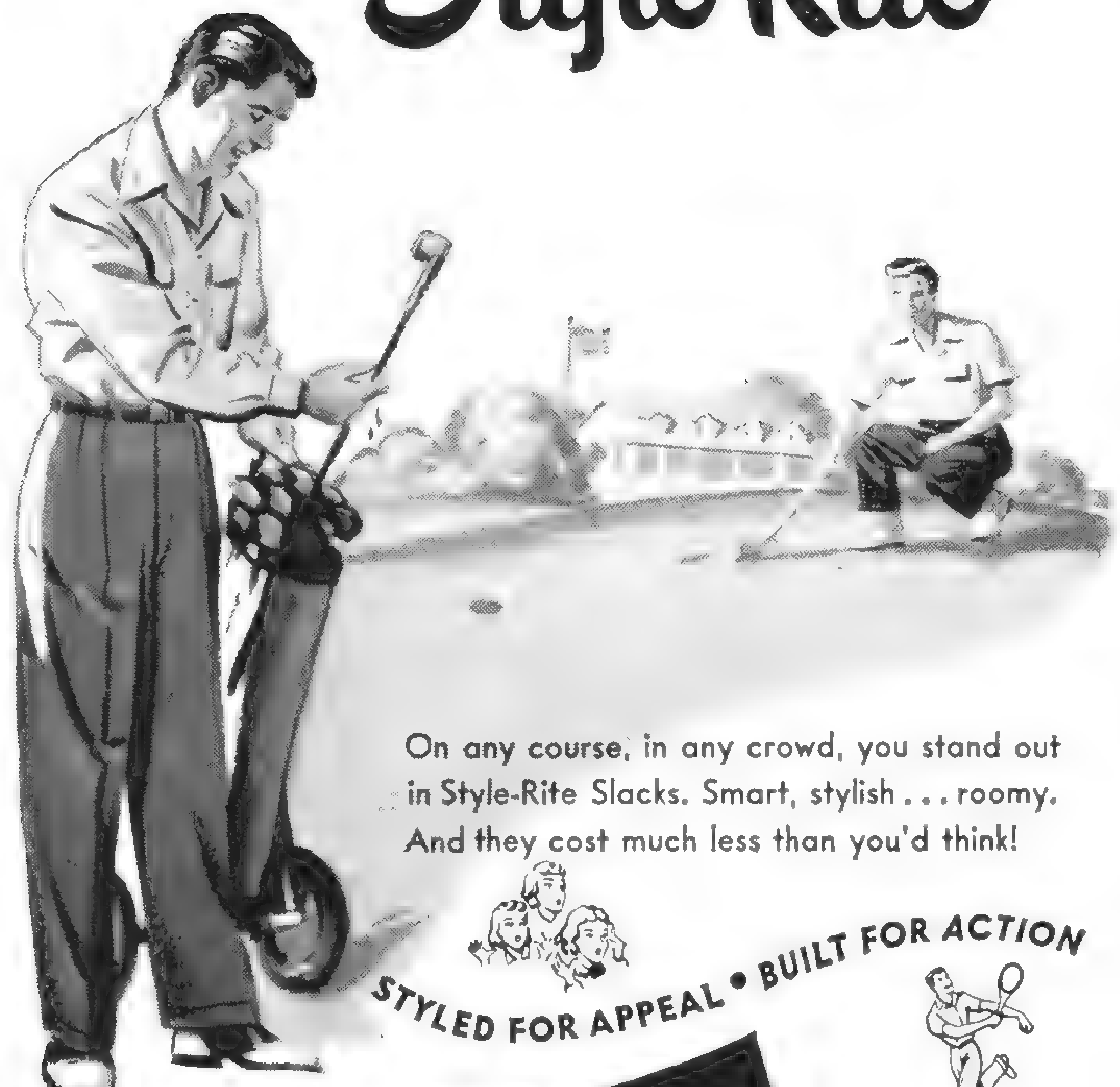

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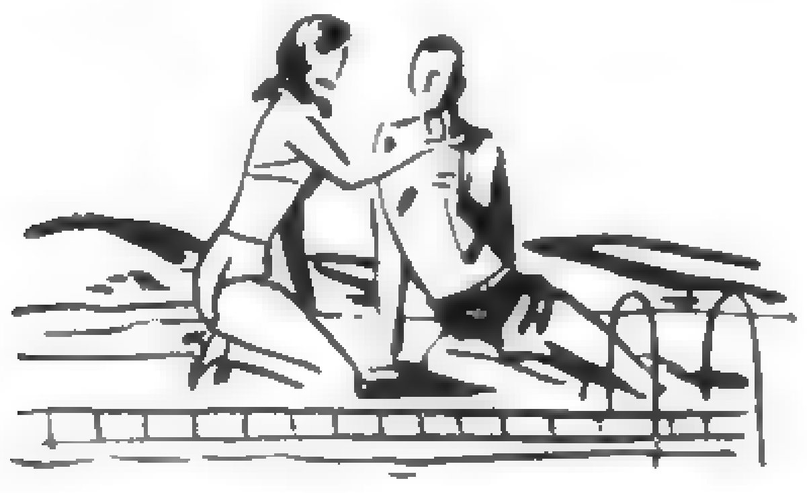

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The Tawdry Mantle of Don Juan

Continued from page 33

drinker. The wolf and the drunk are both trying to drug a dominant anxiety, a suppressed fear, or a sense of insecurity. Through women or whiskey, they try to escape the goads and taunts of an inner voice to which they dare not listen. Society today accepts the fact that the alcoholic is a sick man, more in need of medical therapy than jail sentences. We don't, however, realize that the predatory male is equally sick.

Historically, the best-known and most articulate libertine was Giovanni Casanova. In his *Memoirs*—a boring recapitulation of his victories over assorted chambermaids and dissatisfied wenches—he boasts of his own veracity, since, as he insists, "a man can have no object in deceiving himself." Poor Casanova went to his grave drooling over his tawdry seductions and preserving the illusion that he had never deceived himself. Actually, though, his life was a fantastic tissue of self-deception. Though he fancied himself Eros' gift to panting womankind and a man of virility, he was, at most, a man of very debatable potency.

From a psychological point of view, the mere physical ability to copulate *does not constitute potency*. Man is more than an animal; he has a mind and, though he frequently tries to ignore it, a soul. The physical man is not the whole man. Furthermore, exaggerated sexual activity is an unhealthy obsession, like any other exaggerated activity. A man's virility and sexuality diminish in ratio to the number of outlets required. That is a psychological axiom, and it stands up under the scrutiny of common sense. In other words, a man who must work overtime in search of sexual satisfaction has little if any potential for ever finding it. The normal man loses his urge quickly because satisfaction comes to him easily. The abnormal, neurotic man never loses his desire. As a result, he is goaded into a never-ending quest for the gratification that always eludes him.

He is discontented because he is emotionally and psychically impotent; sex is for him an indigestible meal. Such is his power of self-deception that he never realizes that the monogamous male—whom he scorns and ridicules—derives greater satisfaction—and, too, a greater sense of strength and achievement—from one sexual encounter than the wolf will experience in a lifetime of chasing.

The wolf is invariably an emotionally immature man with an infantile sexuality—or, more often, a pseudosexuality. One of the most common types of libertine is the man who is driven into his career because he is forever trying to prove to himself and to others that he is the virile he-man that a small voice within insists he is not. A seduction accomplished is like an empty glass, and he must seduce again and again—just as an alcoholic drinks and drinks "to drown his sorrows"—in an attempt to allay his fears.

The man with a neurotically developed hostility toward all women also frequently turns predatory. His aggressive pursuit of women is never an expression of the true sex-urge, but is a manifestation of his suppressed hatred of the female sex. When he seduces a woman, he is not only forcing her to submit to him, but, through her as a symbol, he is degrading her whole sex. His love-making is, in reality, an expression of contempt and hatred—and it is frequently sadistic in nature.

An even commoner type of Lothario is the man who engages in the quantitative pursuit of women in order to obtain narcissistic satisfaction. Narcissus, according to the legend, was a handsome young man who fell in love with his own image when he saw it reflected in a pool, without realizing that he was looking at himself. These persons need constant proof of their great desirability and attractiveness. They are apparently normal and often act as if they love their partners. Actually, they are interested only in proving their own ability to attract women. A woman who has yielded to a wolf of this type is merely bolstering his vanity; and once she has yielded, she ceases to serve his purpose. Quickly bored with her, he is likely to rush off in search of fresh prey, again to prove to himself that he is a most irresistible fellow.

Then there is the man who, since he feels inferior and insecure, attempts to assert his superiority through a great number of erotic successes. Each new woman is a challenge to him; he must prove to her that he is as good as she is. Indirectly, he is also proving that he is better than that great army of men who have not enjoyed her favors. He labors for power and prestige, and with his sickly ego inflated, he is a helluva guy; he is, also, as emotionally immature as the small boy who chants, "Yah, yah, yah, *I* stole more apples than *you* did!"

These, roughly, are the most prevalent types of Don Juans. Obviously, they have traits in common. They have a desperate, compulsive need to reassure themselves that they are not as weak or inadequate as their inner voices tell them. To them, the victory over a woman is always more important then the limited sexual satisfaction they may experience. This is why the libertine is so notably lacking in discrimination. Every woman in the world is a theoretical affront to his infantile pseudosexuality—only because she is a woman. The neurotic French king Louis XV is reputed to have told his procurer, "It doesn't matter who she is. Just lead her first to the bath and then

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to the dentist."

Then, too, these Lotharios without exception fancy themselves ultramasculine—gentlemen of awesome and amazing virility. But the word "virility" suggests such qualities of fully developed manhood as dominance, forcefulness, and procreativeness. These men of infantile sexuality, wholly subservient to their own pitiful neurosis, are, in fact, at the opposite pole from virility; and your normal, healthy woman is quick to sense this fact. The man to whom she is drawn is not the neurotic but the truly virile man—the dominant, procreative male who awakens in her a strong and ready response.

The virile man always walks erect. He never needs to emulate the tomcat's prowl, because nature and womankind are forever eager to co-operate with him. Your neurotic is a slave laborer in the field of sex. Your true man is master.

In the last analysis, the wolf doesn't know the meaning of a true sex-urge. He is about as far removed from being a great lover as any creature wearing trousers can be. When understood, he is devoid of glamour and no more romantic than a cold boiled cod. His only distinction is his promiscuity; and promiscuity is an unhealthy adolescent's ideal of sex and an adult male's proof of his own inadequacy.

The playboy whom our friends on the bus were talking about is more to be pitied than envied. Those glamorous personalities whose promiscuities are so widely exploited in the popular press are sick kids in men's britches, and no normal male need be jealous of them. In fact, the normal man experiences more true pleasures in his marital relations with his wife than your Don Juans experience in any of their illicit romances.

Someone once said, "He who concentrates all his interest in women can't be much of a man." *Q.E.D.* ⌗

Here Is Whiteface

Continued from page 37

sociated directly with Placid, the new ski center is some distance away from the village. The south face of Whiteface overlooks the community, but, by road, the ski center is fourteen miles away, at the opposite end of the long summit ridge.

At the foot of the mountain proper, just two miles from the ski center, is the tiny village of Wilmington. In the past, Wilmington was an agreeable little crossroads town—tenanted in summer by those who loved quietness, and left to its own boreal devices during the long winter. To Wilmington, "The Mountain" used to offer a source of revenue only from June to October, during which period a motor road to a point near the summit is open to tourists. Nowadays, however, the somewhat baffled natives are living in a boom town. Developers have swarmed in; private homes have been remodeled to catch the trade of transient skiers; land values have boomed; and estimates suggest that more than a million dollars has been spent in Wilmington since New York's voters put their okay on Whiteface.

This process of change has not been a painless one. Wilmington has always been dry. "Let 'em run up to Placid if they want to drink," was the local decision. When skiing came along, though, a proposal to repeal the dry law appeared on the township ballot, and the town was divided into two hotly contesting factions. When Wilmington finally voted wet to the extent of allowing liquor to be served in hotels only, the furor died down. Luckily, skiers have turned out to be moderate drinkers.

It was a painful experience, though. So was the discovery that Whiteface would not be opened last winter, as the State had planned, because a steel shortage held up completion of the lift.

Whiteface, at the moment, has seven downhill trails, so conscientiously manicured that even the big rocks out in the woods fringing the trails have been removed. There are, as well, two separate open slopes, a $128,000 T-bar lift, and a soon-to-be-completed ski lodge at the base of the lift, which will cost $180,000.

Shortly, there will be half a dozen additional trails, and then Whiteface will be in a class with the world's great ski centers.

To bring this about, the Whiteface Mountain Authority—the operating agency for the ski center—has solicited the advice of more than a thousand expert skiers, professional and amateur alike. The final design for the trails on Marble Mountain was the result of the co-operative efforts of Otto Schniebs and Hannes Schneider, two of America's greatest ski-masters. H. Smith-Johanssen, who had designed Joe Ryan's million-dollar Mt. Tremblant development in the Laurentians, planned the trails on Lookout Mountain. Marble and Lookout Mountains make up the entire Whiteface ski center.

There are a lot of things to be considered in laying out a ski center. First, for instance, there is the basic question of snowfall. In the Adirondacks, you've got to go above 1800-feet elevation (above sea level) to get reliable snow. On Whiteface, there's plenty of snow, but, because the mountain is so steep-sided, it isn't easy to find places where the ground levels off. The ground has to level off so that skiers can stop before they hit the trees.

On this basis, Schneider and Schniebs cruised Marble Mountain until they knew every tree. Often, a promising trail would be

Continued on page 134

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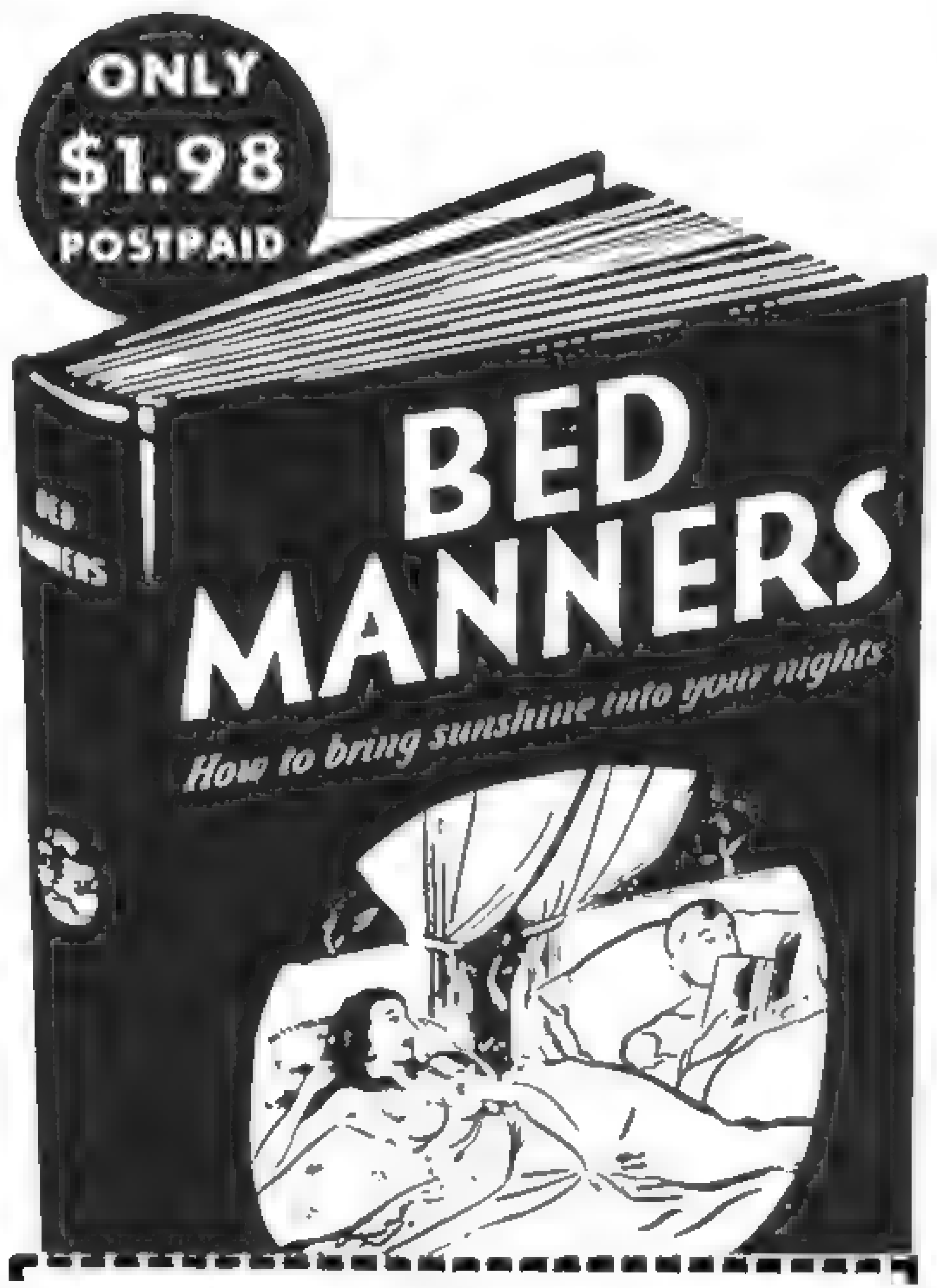

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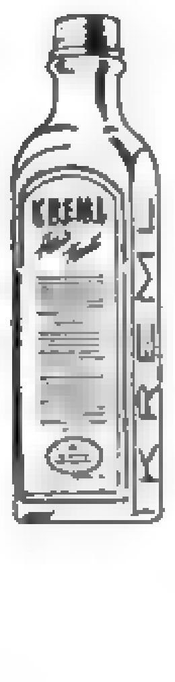

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Here Is Whiteface

Continued from page 133

interrupted by a granite ledge. Sometimes, they could dodge around it. More often, this process of dodging involved so long a distance that the trail flattened out—something that modern skiers, who want to keep going from the top of the mountain to the bottom, won't stand for.

In addition to having plenty of snow, a ski area must have a variety of trails—trails for the dub as well as the expert. The beginner requires gentle open slopes and plenty of space for sitting down. An expert, or racing, trail can be just as steep as you want it—so steep, at times, that the snow almost slides off. The world's championship trail on Whiteface, when cleared, will have a vertical drop of 2800 feet in two miles, and a gradient in places in excess of 38 degrees. But for the novice no trail should be very much steeper than a hilly motor highway.

In mapping out trails, it's essential to take note of the compass direction toward which each trail faces. In the East, where thaws are frequent and devastating, the preferred direction—or "exposure"—is northeast. Trails oriented in this way get a minimum of sunlight and thus lose less snow during those sickening days when the rain comes pelting down. What is more, such a trail is out of the wind.

In the East, the winter winds are often gales, and these come out of the northwest. Face a trail northwest and you'll have ice or bare spots. Face a trail north, and you're taking a chance. Face it east and you'll get a lot of sun. Face it southeast, south, or west, and you'll have mighty little skiing. So—northeast it has to be!

Then, too, the accomplished skier wants the longest, steepest run consistent with his ability. On Whiteface, there is a lot of vertical drop, but much of it faces the wrong direction or is bisected by ledges and cliffs. The trail designers had to find the right places, and they did. The lower-lift area, open this winter, has a vertical drop of 900 feet, with trails nearly a mile long.

Having fulfilled all these requirements, the experts had to mark the routes of the trails. And that's no easy job. They had, you see, to ski mentally down trails that were still in the dream stage. A wide swing on this corner? Yeah, but we'd better move the lower side out a little . . . Two Christies on this schuss, if you're timid . . . Novices will like this section—plenty of room to snowplow. But will the wind come through those saplings? We'd better swing the trail back of those balsams . . .

Next came the cutting crews, the drillers, and the blasters. On the average, it cost $7000 a mile to build the trails on Whiteface. Skiers want their trails ballroom-smooth, suitable for use with just three inches of packed snow. Prehistoric glaciers loaded Whiteface with boulders, and so more than five thousand rocks had to be blasted, bulldozed, or rolled off into the woods. Stumps were yanked out, steep trails were graded by hand, and grass was planted.

H. Smith-Johanssen's recommendations opened up at the 4000-foot elevation a whole new skiing area, reached by a tracked snow-going bus. Almost until Memorial Day, when the valleys are bare, skiers will find snow there.

And so Whiteface came into being. A lot of the natives of Wilmington still find it hard to believe that anyone would be foolish enough to risk life and limb on the trails. Even so, though, a good many people who own a share in Whiteface (it works out to a fraction more than four cents apiece for every man, woman and child in New York State) are skiing there this winter. Risk means no more to them than it did to a "cat" skinner on the project who was assigned to bulldoze a smooth track for the T-Bar lift.

"Looks like a pretty tough job for a cat," mused Hubert Stevens, secretary of the Whiteface Mountain Authority. He squinted up a steep, almost precipitous gash in the woods. "Won't she tip over?"

"Hell's fire, no!" said the cat skinner. "Hey, you," he called to a near-by workman. "Hitch a cable on the back of this here cat and get 'em to start the winch." The cable, looped over a roller at the top of the lift line, began to tighten; the winch motor groaned, and the cat skinner rode backward a thousand vertical feet up the mountainside.

Without the cable, the cat skinner would have tipped over, and there was no guarantee that the thin strands of wire would hold. But, with this dubious life line, he started his motor. The big blade lowered, and the bulldozer groaned down a hill as steep as a mansard roof. Rocks rolled to one side, and the ground was carpeted with a smooth layer of dirt. Finally, the driver and cat reached level ground.

"See?" he grinned at Stevens. "Nothin' to it."

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GIVE

Continued from page 37

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Shoot Little Chicken

Continued from page 67

at the bare sand, waiting to be fed. We didn't see hide nor feathers of old Randolph.

"I give him the run of my back forty," Paw explained. "Keeps him in shape, running that rough ground. Randolph!"

We walked on down to the barn.

"Randolph, sir!"

"Where's that cock at, Sporting Life?" said Bethel.

"He's about. Randolph!"

Then we heard a terrible squawking. I recognized that racket. It like to made me sick to think how Paw was going to suffer. All of a sudden, here come old Randolph, traveling around the corner of the barn like lightning through a gooseberry bush—with Maw's big old Rhode Island Red, Sary, hot behind him.

I had been afraid that was going to happen. Sary was old Randolph's favorite hen of the lot, too, and when they were getting along peaceful-like, you'd see them paired off pecking the sand together. But the thing was, they didn't always get along peacefullike. And when they weren't, Sary would give him what-for. Randolph would get so mad at her you'd think he was going to bust. His hackles would rise and he'd glare at her out of his one eye.

He was too much gentleman to fight a hen, but when old Sary got him hackled it wasn't hardly safe to be around him. I saw him kill a stray cock of Rance Odell's in one shuffle one time when Sary had got him hackled.

But he couldn't bluff old Sary. Sary would charge him and Randolph would turn tail and run—a thing he'd do for no other fowl nor beast alive.

"Hold up, Randolph!" Paw shouted.

Randolph kept on traveling.

"Hot almighty dog!" Bethel shouted. "Oh, me, oh, my! If that ain't a cutter it'll go for one! Climb my frame if that ain't rich!" He started in to laughing, "Yaw! Yaw! Oh, Sporting Life," he gasped. "You've throwed the switch!"

Paw didn't see her, but Maw came out of the barn. She was carrying a bucket of milk. Paw showed up late for milking right often—and there wasn't a thing puckered Maw more than that. Paw said to Bethel, "You laughing at my gamecock?"

"You sure that's a gamecock?"

Paw was that mad he was dancing up and down in the sand. "I'll show you what's a gamecock!"

"You ain't hankering to pit that old capon, are you?"

"I'll pit him!" Paw shouted. "Why, hound, yes!"

"I got an Allen Roundhead, Sporting Life," Bethel said. "He'll weigh over six:six—a shake. It just so happens I got him with me. You hankering for a match, well maybe I can oblige."

"Well, now . . ."

"I was aiming to make that cockfight down to Chinaberry on Sunday," Bethel said. "What about Sunday, Sporting Life?"

Paw was so mad I reckon he didn't know what he was saying. "It's a match," he said. "Sunday."

"You aiming to back that old blinker?"

"You heard what I said!" Paw shouted. "A man wants a bet, he don't have to go no further than Sporting Life Ramsey."

"Five hundred dollars on the Roundhead."

Maw heard that. "Hold up!" she shouted.

Paw saw her coming. He backed away. "Wait a minute, Viney . . ."

"You get on into the barn and finish milking," Maw said. " 'Sporting Life,' indeed; five hundred dollars, indeed!"

Paw was no match for Maw when she was puckered. He backed into the barn.

I reckon Bethel had met Maw earlier in the afternoon. He laughed, easylike. "I was just messing around, Missus Ramsey. I wouldn't go and bet on a sure thing with your husband. A man in my position don't need to . . ."

"I'm mighty glad to hear that, Mister Scott," Maw said. "Sometimes Lonnie ain't responsible." She smiled at old Bethel like she figured a man with the finest chicken farm in South Georgia couldn't do no wrong. "You folks going out for the evening?"

"Figured we might go down to Gomer's Place for a little jooking, ma'am, with your agreement . . ."

"Why, do."

"Proud to have seen you, ma'am."

"Come when you feel like it."

"I'll do it, now," Bethel said.

He and Maybird started walking, hand-in-hand, towards his big shiny red sedan. I climbed up into the haymow to throw old Bokus his supper. I heard Bethel come back into the barn.

"Five hundred, Sporting Life?" I heard him whisper.

Paw was milking old Bess. *Squirrrrp, squirrrrp*—"Five hundred"—*squirrrrp,squirrrrp*—"you dadburned slink!"

Bethel just laughed.

Old Bess went to mooing.

"Shush up!" Paw said.

Paw didn't get much work done about the place that week. He spent all his waking hours with Randolph.

He picked him up—cooped him—that first night, after Bethel left. He started him right out on his conditioning diet. That rooster never ate so well in his life: corn, wheat, oats, and buckwheat to strengthen him; raw meat and raw oysters to make him mean; greens to freshen him. Every other day Paw would muff Randolph and a shakecock he'd borrowed off Rance Odell and spar the two of them. It seemed to me that Randolph wasn't near as quick to shoot—to go up in the air shuffling—as he once was. But as far as Paw was concerned there wasn't a thing that old cock could do that wasn't perfect. In between spar-

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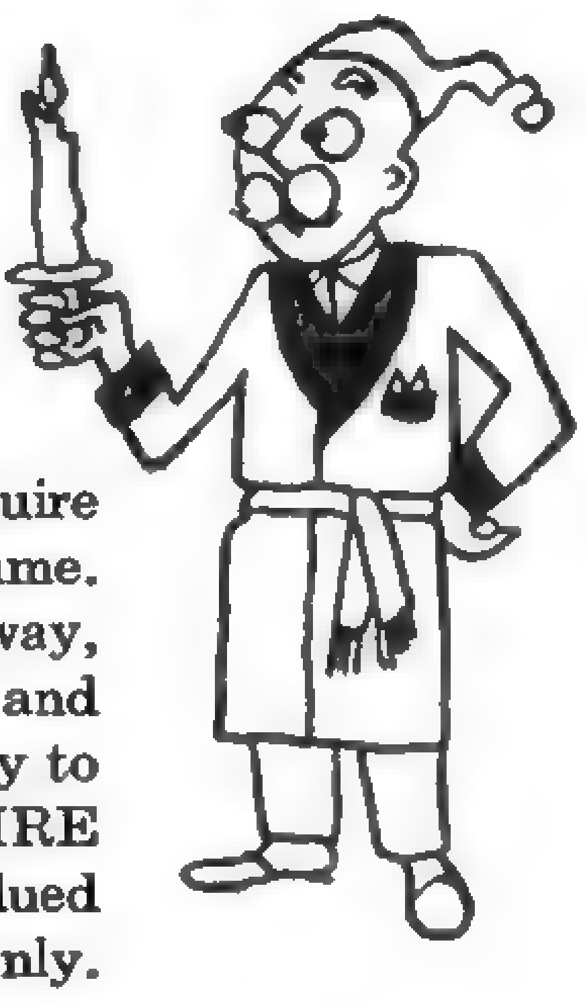

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Shoot Little Chicken

Continued from page 135

ring sessions and feedings Paw would run old Randolph on a ten-foot running board he'd made for him. Then he'd work him out on a flirting table he'd made out of an old screen door he'd been saving about the place. Then he'd rub him down with grain alcohol.

As the week wore on Randolph seemed to be remembering how he'd whipped every cock he'd ever fought. It was funny to see him when old Sary would drop by for a visit. Randolph wouldn't pay no mind to the other hens, but when Sary was there he'd strut back and forth in his coop, throw out his chest, and crow, and his one eye would shine fierce as a treed painter's. It was like he was saying to Sary, "Look at me now, old gal! I'm young again. I'm the cock of the walk . . ."

Sary would walk away clucking like she didn't believe a word the old fool was saying.

Bethel came by for Maybird two, three evenings that week. Bethel would always give Paw a howdy. "How's that chicken, Sporting Life?" he'd say.

"You don't want to worry none about that chicken."

Maw and Maybird would look at Paw and shake their heads.

"I'm mighty happy," Maw said once to Bethel, "that you was a big enough man not to let Lonnie bet no cash money on that old brood cock of his."

"I wouldn't take unfair advantage of a man, Missus Ramsey. I'm known in South Georgia as a man foursquare and honest to a fault. I've built my reputation on them principles."

He reached for Maybird's hand.

Maybird lowered her eyes. Her lips trembled. It sure did look to me like we was fixing to end up with the biggest chicken farm in South Georgia in the family—which would be all right if Bethel Scott didn't go with it.

"Haw!" Paw said. He stomped out of the room.

Sunday turned off hot and bright. Paw and Randolph and me was at the pit outside Chinaberry early. Rance Odell, old man Malfers, O. D. Bafus, and most all Paw's friends came in soon. They had got wind of Paw's match. They had aplenty to say.

"That old cock?" Rance said. "Randolph? As manager of this here pit, as judge, I ought to forbid it."

"You don't want to worry none about Randolph," Paw said.

"That chicken won't get off the ground, Lonnie!" said O. D. Bafus.

Paw took it easy. He didn't get hackled none. "You boys know old Randolph," he said. "Randolph's a fighter. He fights with his head up. He fights with his feet to the fore. He breaks on top. He has never ducked. You want a tip, get down on old Randolph."

Just then we saw Bethel's red sedan drive into the clearing. We saw he had a girl with him. We saw him get out, rush around the car, and open the door. The girl was Maybird. Bethel put his arm about her and whispered something in her ear. Maybird smiled. She walked over to the open pit beneath the live oaks and sat in the bleachers.

Bethel started taking portable coops from his car.

O. D. said, "Seems like your family's on the other side of the fence, Lonnie. Seems like . . ."

Then Paw really got hackled. He was mighty fond of that Maybird. I knew it hurt him aplenty to have her string along with the opposition. "Boys," he said, "fun's fun. But Randolph ain't the only fighting rooster in this family. I also never duck."

The boys, saving Rance Odell, just chuckled and walked away. Paw got Rance to start with the heaviest cocks—Randolph and Bethel's shake—first.

"Hold old Randolph," Paw said to me, "for I'm fixing to heel him."

He'd nubbed Randolph's spurs earlier in the week. He wrapped the spurs. He took his shining steel two-and-a-quarter-inch high-point killing gaffs from their case. He fitted the leather bases of the gaffs over the spurs. He bound them firm to the cock's legs. He walked old Randolph for a minute. Then he slapped him easy-like around the beak a few times. Randolph glared at him.

"Come on, son—for we're ready to fight," said Paw.

The bleachers had filled. The crowd hooted and yelled as Paw stepped into the pit, but Paw paid the crowd no mind.

Bethel climbed over the railing. He had his Allen Roundhead shake—winner five times in a row, I'd heard—tucked beneath his arm. Without even seeing that cock on the ground I could tell he was good. He looked to be a high-breaking, deadly-cutting, smart-stepping cock, and I sure did feel sorry for Paw and old Randolph.

Rance Odell came into the pit while the bettors were drumming up business, but they had mighty few takers. "Bill your birds," Rance ordered.

Bethel grinned at Maybird. He and Paw stepped to the middle of the pit with their roosters in their arms. They held their roosters' heads together—to let them peck and hackle.

"Pit your cocks," Rance said.

"Forty to a hundred on Ramsey's Grey!"

There were mighty few takers.

The Roundhead met Randolph on his score and gave him a long, rolling shuffle that sounded like taking the slack out of a freight train. Randolph never got off the dirt floor of the pit.

"Handle your birds," Rance said.

The Roundhead had a gaff buried in Randolph's breast.

The crowd yelled.

"One to three on Ramsey!"

"Pit!"

This time old Randolph wasn't

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caught napping. He met the Roundhead in the middle of the pit. He went into the air with him, shuffling. They hit the ground. They struck again, and the feathers—red and grey—flew. Randolph was fighting mad now. He was trying—trying hard—but the Roundhead was breaking on top. Randolph just didn't have the wind strength any more. The next time they shot they went down with one of the Roundhead's gaffs hung in Randolph's head.

"Handle!"

Paw was on them almost as they hit the dirt.

"I reckon that does it, Sporting Life," Bethel said.

Paw didn't have time to argue. Randolph was bad hurt. His crop was filling with blood. Paw drew the blood away. He breathed fresh air into Randolph's lungs. He dipped into the water can at the end of the pit and doused Randolph's head. He smoothed Randolph's feathers.

"One to five on Ramsey!"

No takers.

"Pit!"

Randolph came out staggering, but staggering straight for the Roundhead, dead game; wobbly, but fighting mad. The Roundhead met him a foot from Randolph's score. Randolph got off the ground, but the Roundhead topped him.

This time the Roundhead was into his wing.

When Paw got to Randolph, his wing was broken.

I looked across the pit at Maybird. Her face was pale.

I watched one more pitting. Randolph, broken wing and all, met the Roundhead at the middle of the pit. He tried to rise. It was no use.

"Ten to one on the Roundhead!"

Randolph's head was in the dirt. The Roundhead was after it. Randolph couldn't move. His one good eye was shining, but he just couldn't move. I felt my stomach churning. I didn't know how I was going to stand it around the place without old Randolph. I didn't know how Maw and Maybird were going to stand it. I didn't know how old Sary was going to stand it. Sary, I thought . . . Sary!

I just had to do *something*!

It wasn't more than three minutes down the road to our place the way I drove it in Paw's pickup. I was back at the pit, with Sary, inside of eight minutes.

Randolph had somehow managed to show enough fight—one feeble peck at the right time is all it takes—to keep the fight going. He was right where I'd left him—a whipped chicken, three-quarters dead—still hanging on. His one eye was still intact. It seemed like all the life left to him was centered right in that one eye. It was as fierce, as fighting mad, as ever before. In his clouding mind I reckon he was telling hisself he was still the cock of the walk—the very best of them all.

Poor old Paw was looking like a man who'd just lost the family fortune—and I reckon he mighty near had; but Bethel had a smirk on his face a foot wide.

Maybird was looking at Paw. Her eyes were bigger and darker than I'd ever seen them before. Maybird had never before seen a cockfight. The excitement had done something to her. There was love and loyalty and sympathy pouring out of those great big eyes at Paw.

The Roundhead was circling Randolph now, crowing, strutting, stopping every now and then to take a peck at Randolph's head. Randolph was just lying there—his head bloody, just glaring.

"Randolph!" I shouted.

I swear Randolph looked at me.

"Randolph!" I set old Sary before me on the railing.

Sary clucked, and Randolph raised his head slightly. *Cutcutcutcaaadaaacut!* Sary clucked. Randolph got a leg under him. Randolph staggered to his feet.

There was one big gasp from the crowd.

The Roundhead was circling now, waiting. You could have heard a watch tick. Then the Roundhead started moving in.

Maybird stood. Her eyes were shining, but not as before; hard-shining now, glittering. "Randolph!" she shouted. "Shoot, little chicken!"

Caadaaacaadaaacut! said Sary.

"Shoot! Shoot! Shoot, little chicken!" said Maybird.

The Roundhead charged. Randolph met him on the rise, shuffling, giving it everything he had in one last try, outbreaking the Roundhead for the first time. They hit the dirt in a mass of feathers and blood.

Randolph's gaffs were buried in the Roundhead's head.

The Roundhead was dead when Bethel picked him up.

Paw just stood there holding Randolph in his arms.

It was some minutes—after Paw had done what he could for Randolph and bedded him down with Sary in the pickup—before he thought of Bethel Scott and the five hundred. "Where's that big cocker from South Georgia?" he asked.

Marvin Purdy was standing there. "What big cocker from South Georgia, Lonnie?"

"Why, Bethel Scott."

"I'm from South Georgia," Marvin said. "I never heard tell of Bethel Scott."

"Where'd he go to, Maybird?"

"Dogged if I know," Maybird said. She smiled.

Paw shrugged his shoulders. "Come on, Virgil," he said to me. "Come on, Maybird," he said to Maybird. "I want to get on home and doctor old Randolph. He'll pull through with the right kind of treatment."

Maybird gave Paw a big kiss. "I'll be home later," she said. She looked up at Marvin Purdy. Her cheeks flushed red. Her eyes shone bright . . .

Paw groaned. He shook his head. I reckon he figured to make the best of it.

Paw and me, we went on home. ⌗

Continued from page 67

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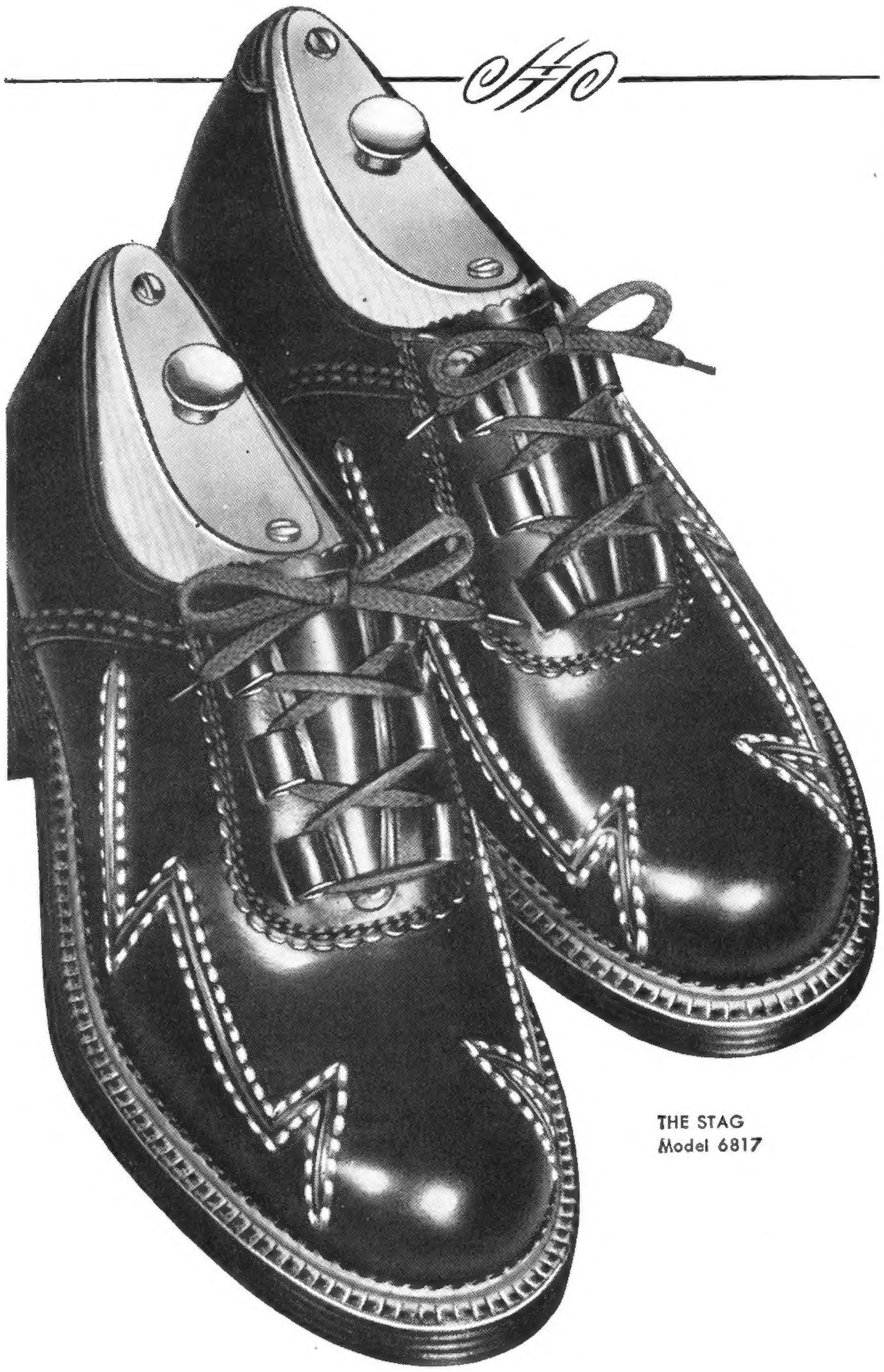

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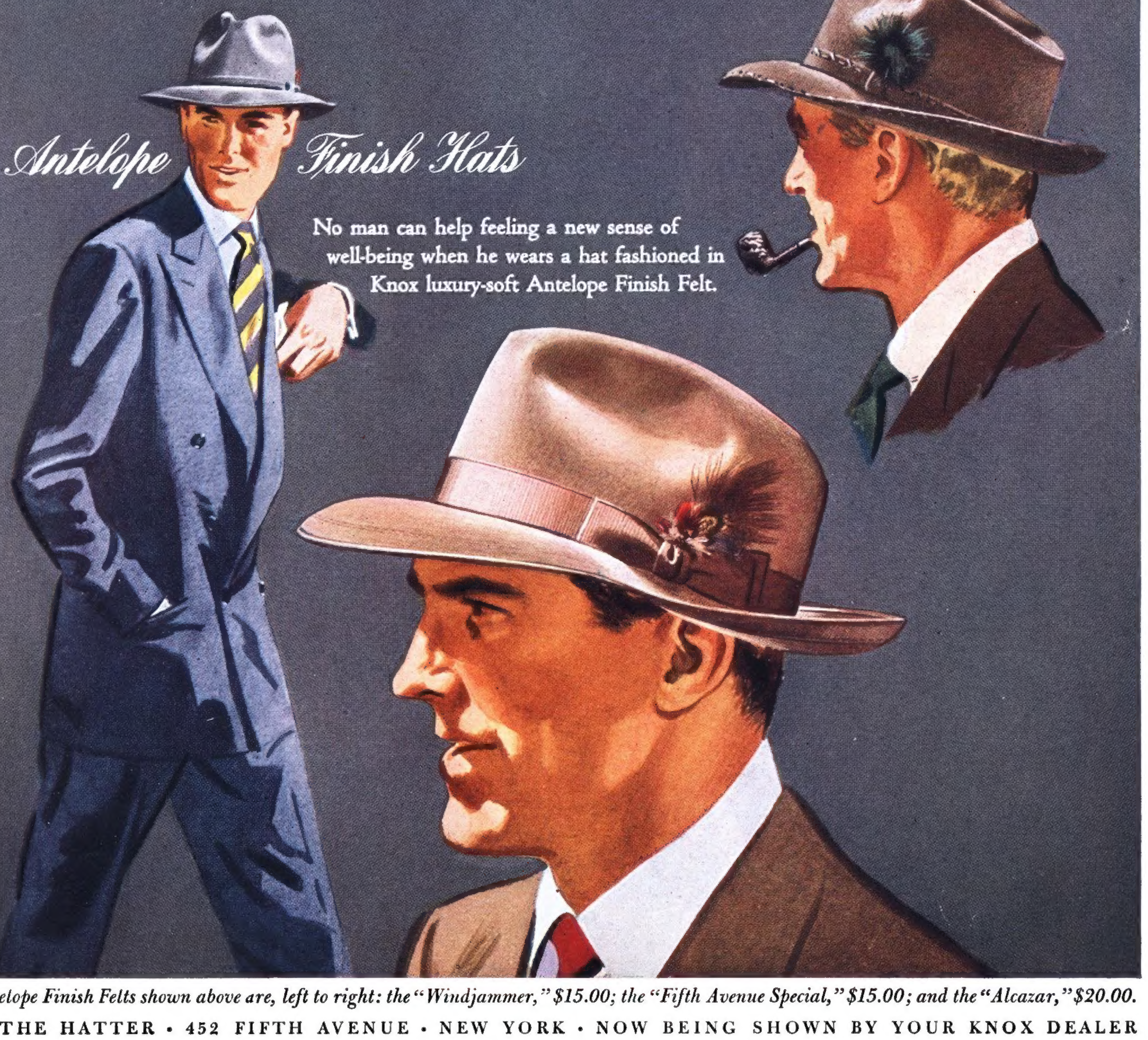

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